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NOTICES.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of THE BOOKMAN, ST. PAUL'S HOUSE, WARWICK SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.

No unused communications will be returned whether stamps are enclosed for that purpose or not, and to this rule we can make no exception.

News Notes.

Once again we have the pleasure of presenting to our readers a Double Christmas Number of THE BOOKMAN. In former years both our readers and our critics have "entreated us fairly": the former by speedily exhausting the issue, the latter by a generous acknowledgment of the manner in which we have surmounted the difficulty of affording our readers a trustworthy guide to the best "Books of To-Day and Books of To-Morrow." We have spared no effort to make the present number at least as attractive as its predecessors. Herein is literally something for everybody. For the earnest bookman there are articles by Mr. Sidney Lee, Professor Pollard, and a score of other distinguished writers and critics. The Christmas flavouring is supplied by the capable hands of Mr. R. C. Lehmann and Mr. Alfred Noyes. On the art side we present some of the triumphs of Mr. Dulac's pencil, and, by the kindness of many publishers, a generous and representative selection of the best illustrations of the season. Our special Illustrated Supplement will, as usual, speak for itself. It is recognised as an indispensable guide by all givers and all expectant recipients of gifts. In a word, we have tried to do our share in fulfilling old Thomas Tusser's behest:

> At Christmas play and make good cheer,
> For Christmas comes but once a year.

The former line we pass on to our readers with the compliments of the season. The latter we retain as a consolation to ourselves.

In the preparation of this number, we have, as before, enjoyed the co-operation of most of the publishers in the country. In another place, and throughout the number, we have endeavoured to record these obligations in detail, but we would express the wish that any oversight in this matter will be rightly charged to inadvertence, and not to any want of our appreciation and indebtedness for an often renewed courtesy.

The January number of THE BOOKMAN will contain a special illustrated article on Trollope by Mr. Lewis Melville.

The revival of folk-song—not merely its collection by the antiquary but its practice by the people—which started in a working-girls' club in North-West

London, is spreading into a national movement. The beautiful concerts given by the Esperance Club in the Queen's Hall attract even more crowded and enthusiastic audiences. Apostles are being sent forth to preach the gospel. Now Mr. Cecil Sharp, one of the prime movers, has written a book dealing with the subject historically, musically, and in a spirit of propagation. "Folk Song: Some Conclusions" is an excellent commentary on the author's three volumes of Folk Songs from Somerset.

In an interesting article contributed by Katherine Tynan to the *Dublin Review* some notes by Lionel Johnson on his contemporary poets, made twelve

Mrs. Philip de Crespigny,
Author of "The Spanish Prisoner," a capital historical romance, which Mr. Eveleigh Nash has just published.

years ago, see the light for the first time. They show Johnson a critic of much mental accuracy and refinement. This of Watson is good: "He has *worked* at *poetry*, and has made himself a sonorous *orator*, a fine declaimer, a dexterous manager of words. He respects himself and the English language." And this of Davidson: "Earthly in a good sense; loves facts and Darwin: dreams and wonders and imagines, but always with a kind of robust consciousness."

It is satisfactory to find that one is not entirely dependent on the Vedrenne-Barker management for good plays and that real, sincere drama—something

Mr. Halliwell Sutcliffe,
Whose new novel, "Toward the Dawn," has just been published.

better than the Pineros and Sutros and Joneses—is to be seen elsewhere than at the Savoy Theatre. "Irene Wycherley," the new play produced by Miss Lena Ashwell, is not calculated to give pleasure to a sentimental public. But Mr. Anthony P. Wharton, who has never had a play on the stage before, treats murder and suicide, adultery and drunkenness and brute cruelty in a way that is psychologically and artistically satisfying. Also he proves himself an adept in technique and a master of dialogue.

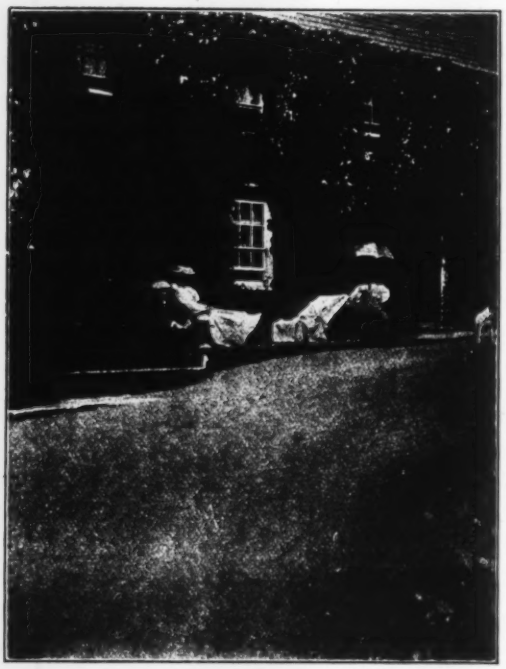
Mr. H. C. Bailey,
The creator of "Raoul, Gentleman of Fortune," and author of "The God of Clay," a story of Napoleon's rise to power, which has been appearing in the *Pall Mall Magazine*.

This photograph was taken on board the *Alert*, on the passage from Guernsey to Sark. The young lady on the left is Miss Collings, daughter of the Seigneur of Sark. Mr. Oxenham stands on the right, and was not aware that he came into the picture. At the helm is Captain Bichard, the finest pilot in Sark waters. He is popularly reputed to be able to smell his way across in the thickest fog the Channel can produce.

It is interesting to see an announcement of a reprint of "The English Spy. By Bernard Blackmantle," though the value of the book to-day is to be found in the several scores of coloured plates by Robert Cruikshank. "Bernard Blackmantle" was, of course, that scoundrelly blackmailing journalist Charles Molley Westmacott, whose very name is almost forgotten to-day. "The English Spy," which appeared in parts in 1824, is a survey of the fast side of London life, and Westmacott did not hesitate to introduce under very transparent disguise many prominent persons of the day, such as Lord Petersham of overcoat fame, and "Golden Ball" Hughes who ran off with Mlle. Mercandotti of the Opera, which affair inspired Ainsworth with a couplet:

> "The fair damsel is gone, and no wonder at all,
> That, bred to the dance, she has gone to a ball."

Less familiar to present-day readers even than "The English Spy" is Westmacott's "Fitzalleyne of Berkeley," which, cast in the form of a romance, is the story of Maria Foote, her *liaison* with the notorious Colonel Berkeley and her action for breach of promise against "Pea-Green" Hayne. Westmacott hoped to be bought off, but so well known were all the episodes in the narrative that no one thought it worth while to do so, so in due course the work appeared, and the author secured a considerable profit and a yet more considerable infamy.



Petit Dixcart,

The residence of the Misses Hale, daughters of the late medical officer of Sark.

Very entertaining should be the volume on Mr. George Bernard Shaw in the "Stars of the Stage" series, for it has been written by a person no less outspoken than Mr. G. K. Chesterton. It is to be hoped that, after a perusal of this monograph, Mr. Shaw may be induced by some enterprising publisher to express his opinion of Mr. Chesterton!

Among the new novelists, no one is more prominent than Mr. William de Morgan and Mr. Archibald Marshall, the editor of the *Daily Mail* Books Supplement. Last month we announced a new book by Mr. de Morgan, and now the news comes that early next year Mr. Marshall will publish another, his fifth, story. This will be awaited with much interest, for Mr. Marshall's improvement as a writer of fiction has been steady.

Mr. H. C. Bailey is rapidly coming to the front as a writer of historical fiction. His new story "Raoul, Gentleman of Fortune," is an admirable piece of work, vigorous and attractive, and the central character is a delightful creation. Though not himself an historical character, "Raoul" is largely modelled on Martin Schenk, the famous German who laughed at all the Spanish forces, and on Roger Williams, the fiery Welshman who fought under Leicester.

Mr. Bailey's next book, "The God of Clay," which has been appearing serially in the *Pall Mall Magazine*, will be issued early next year. It is a story of Napoleon's rise to power. A further series of stories of historical interest from Mr. Bailey's pen will appear in the *Pall Mall Magazine* next year, and he is now at work on a romance of the Civil War, for which he has been collecting materials for some considerable time.

Mrs. Philip de Crespigny, the author of "The Spanish Prisoner," an historical novel which has been very favourably received, is planning a new book, the scene of which is laid in Italy at the time of the Borgias. "The Spanish Prisoner" is Mrs. de Crespigny's fifth novel, and she certainly lives a busy life, for she divides her time between writing and painting, and has exhibited water colours in many of the London Galleries. Mrs. de Crespigny has a "one-man show" at the Doré Gallery every two years.

Mr. John Oxenham is devoted to Sark, as readers of his new and very successful novel, "Carette of Sark," will have discovered. Mr. Oxenham first visited the island a few years since, and now generally arranges to spend at least some weeks there every year. The accompanying snapshots were taken by a friend this summer while Mr. Oxenham was in Sark writing the letterpress which is to accompany a volume of colour pictures of Sark by William A. Toplis, which Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton will issue shortly.

Mr. Oxenham has in preparation a new novel to be entitled "Pearl of Pearl Island," the scene of which is laid partly in London but chiefly in Sark. Some of the curious superstitions and the romantic atmosphere of the little island are deftly worked into the story, and in it we make still clearer acquaintance with the Sark of to-day than in Mr. Oxenham's former book. The volume will be fully illustrated with photographs of the "little unknown world" taken on the spot.

A literary event of the "fall" has been the delightful fiftieth anniversary number of the *Atlantic Monthly*, one of the last abiding-places of the old English Essay in its pristine purity and perfection. The idea of the American *Maga* dates back to 1853, to one of those twelfth men of letters who are never quite in the first team, Francis H. Underwood. Four years later it was taken up by the Boston publisher, Phillips, when Lowell was secured as editor, and the Concord group as contributors. James Hannay contributed to the first number a paper on Douglas Jerrold, but it became rapidly more New England in tone, though it is true that Charles Eliot Norton in 1858 was anxious to secure for it the services of "Mr. George Eliot," whose

The Look-out on Top of the Seigneurie Tower,

One hundred feet above ground. Mr. Oxenham was perched up aloft when his friend took advantage of the opportunity and caught him on the wing.

Sieur Philip Carré,

Greffier of Sark—that is, Clerk of the Court and of the Parliament. He was telling the points of his favourite dog when the camera caught him. Mr. Oxenham appears incidentally on the left.

"Adam Bede" had just appeared. Many entertaining letters concerned with the redaction are given here.

The story of the magazine and its successive editors—J. T. Fields, Howells, and Aldrich—is narrated from different points of view without ever becoming tedious. Its early contributors, such as Prescott, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Bryant, Emerson, Motley, Whittier, Cabot, and the Stowes, take us back to the palmy days of American literature. But in an especial degree the *Atlantic* (which owed to the Autocrat its very name, for it was first designed as the *Anglo-American*, or *Town and Country*) elicited what was best in Dr. O. W. Holmes. The *Atlantic* was to him what the *London* was to Lamb ; it gave him a solar reputation as an essayist.

In the paper on *Atlantic* Dinners, an amusing account is given of the inability of Concord and its sages to understand the newer post-prandial humour as represented by Mark Twain. They smoked long cigars and pondered each joke well ; but it was something not dreamt of in Emersonian philosophy. Longfellow under this stress assumed his usual amiable countenance, as much as to say, "I understand it all, and am amused." Mr. Howells, who serves as a link between a past editor (Lowell) and the present editor (Mr. Bliss Perry), tells some amusing stories and affirms his belief that the best proof-reading in the world is done at Cambridge, presumably at the Riverside Press—a pious opinion to which Oxford, and Printing House Square, might possibly have something to say.

Among the reprints promised, two of the most wonderful shillingsworths, surely, are Prescott's "Conquest of Peru" (in Everyman's Library, with an introduction by Mr. Thomas Seccombe), and "Gil Blas" (in the World's Classics, with an introduction by Mr. Fitzmaurice Kelly).

A very interesting and readable gossiping guide to Greece and the Egean Isles is on the eve of publication by Mr. Philip Sanford Marden, of Lowell. Excellent books as are those by Wordsworth and Dr. Mahaffy, they do not correspond very closely to modern conditions. The Greek scholar of to-day is apt to be austere, pompous, or condescending. What is required by the new generation is a competent but friendly and practical guide to the remoter parts of Hellas for the thousands who are lured by their imaginations to disembark at the Piræus. This is what Mr Marden endeavours to give.

Miss Edith Sichel is preparing another work on the French Court of the late Valois period, which will deal with the later career of Catharine de' Medicis and her circle, and which will be ready for press almost immediately.

Two new volumes of Longman's "Political History"—those by Mr. Sidney Low on England from 1837, and by Professor Lodge on the later seventeenth century—will be out by the new year.

All bibliographers and librarians will hail with profound gratitude Mr. G. L. Gomme's wonderful "Index of Archæological Papers," the work of over twenty years, in which the transactions of just under a hundred learned societies, from the Royal Society and the Anthropological Institute to the Royal Historical Society, the Cymmrodorion, the Antiquaries, and the chief county archæological societies, are brought together in one alphabetical index. This extends from the first numbers down to 1891, when the shilling annual index commences.

Those interested in the social life of the Regency, Gronow, and Creevey period will welcome an unobtrusive little volume published by the Ambrose Company, under the title of "Vignettes of the Regency," from the pen of Mr. William Toynbee. It is illustrated by excellent portraits, which sufficiently indicate its scope, of Canning, Castlereagh, Wellesley, Addington, Pitt, Melbourne, and Sir John Moore.

We desire to offer our very sincere sympathy to Mrs. Everard Cotes ("Sarah Jeanette Duncan") on the death of her father, Mr. Charles Duncan, which recently took place at Brantford, Canada. Our readers may remember that Mrs. Cotes dedicated her novel "The Imperialist" to her father. We understand that he always took the keenest and most affectionate interest in his daughter's literary work.

The coloured frontispiece in this number of THE BOOKMAN is reproduced by the kind permission of Messrs. Chatto & Windus.

For the pictures illustrating our leading article on "The Letters of Queen Victoria," we are obliged to the courtesy of the publisher, Mr. John Murray.

The article in this number on "Some Colour-Books of the Season" was made possible only by the kindness of the following publishers, who courteously enabled us to reproduce in black and white examples of their choicest colour-work: Messrs. J. M. Dent, Messrs. Chatto & Windus, Messrs. A. & C. Black, Messrs. T. C. & E. C. Jack, Messrs. Cassell & Co., Messrs. George Bell & Sons.

THE READER.

THE QUEEN'S LETTERS.*

By Sidney Lee.

THERE can be no doubt that the late Queen would have approved in the main this publication of her correspondence. Unauthorised revelations which seemed to her to be indiscreet moved her warm resentment. She never pardoned the publication of the Greville Memoirs, which unveiled the inner workings of politics with a cynical detachment. But she gave in her lifetime numerous proofs of anxiety to communicate to her people on no niggardly scale selected details of both her private and her public experiences. Soon after the Prince Consort's death she offered to the world a history of his early years, in which the intimate story of her courtship and marriage was told from her diary and letters. The same personal sources of information were laid, by her direction, under generous contribution by Sir Theodore Martin in his monumental Life of the Prince. Domestic and political events were there narrated with a fulness and a frankness which had no precedent in the field of royal biography. Twice did she publish long series of extracts from her journal, which lifted the curtain with an ever more liberal hand on her domestic privacy. She permitted the inclusion of letters from herself in the memoirs of statesmen and others who had come into close relations with her. The biographies of Sir Robert Peel, Lord Tennyson, and Archbishop Benson supply many specimens of the Queen's correspondence which strip her opinions and idiosyncrasies of all disguise. It is common knowledge that in her last days she contemplated a further excursion in the direction of autobiography, and that death frustrated the development of a design to give her people from her own point of view a history of the place that she filled in the nation's life.

This communicative tendency, of which her activity as a letter-writer is a collateral manifestation, throws important light on the late Queen's character. A faith and pride in her wisdom and rectitude in all relations of life rendered her anxious to keep the public informed of her personal affairs. With spirit she defended herself from the criticism of her family circle regarding the lack of reserve in the books about herself, which were issued by her authority. The telling of the truth was in her opinion the only way of anticipating or meeting undeserved censure. Her alienation from Mr. Gladstone may be almost said to date from his deprecation of any reply to the journalistic invectives against her seclusion during widowhood. She wished to announce the precise particulars of her unceasing devotion to public business, when her sorrows prevented her from taking part in the ceremonials of royalty. She privately addressed a communication on the subject to the *Times* newspaper. She was always convinced that the more her subjects knew of her conduct and career, the greater would be their loyal regard for her person.

The design of these massive volumes has therefore adequate justification from the late Queen's point of view. Personal affairs may possibly occupy a more subordinate place than she would have recommended. Politics here fill a far larger area of the stage than in the authorised publications respecting the Queen's career which are already accessible, and perhaps a wider space than an exhaustive survey of her multifarious private interests and occupations quite justifies. But the new book's chances of permanence are improved by the preponderance of politics. The domestic experience even of a sovereign has evanescent significance. These volumes are by no means free from ephemeral domesticities, but they are richer in more attractive metal. They

From the Picture by F. Winterhalter at Windsor Castle.

H.M. Queen Victoria, 1843.

(Reproduced from "The Letters of Queen Victoria," by kind permission of Mr. John Murray.)

* The Letters of Queen Victoria.—A selection from Her Majesty's correspondence between the years 1837 and 1861, published by the authority of His Majesty the King. Edited by Arthur Christopher Benson, M.A., and Viscount Esher, G.C.V.O., K.C.B. 3 vols. (John Murray.)

From the Miniature at Windsor Castle by H. Bone after Sir W. Beechey.

T.R.H. The Duchess of Kent and Princess Victoria.

(Reproduced from "The Letters of Queen Victoria," by kind permission of Mr. John Murray.)

illustrate with unexampled fulness the manner in which the Queen habitually corresponded with her ministers. They declare her views on political questions of every variety of importance. They bear witness to her exalted estimate of her official rights and authority. The topics are miscellaneous and a little chaotic, ranging from vapidities like a dinner invitation and royal regrets of inability to attend a court function, to issues of moment like a change of ministry and a declaration of war. It is not, moreover, the Queen's voice alone which speaks from these pages. Not merely are we offered the Queen's own compositions with little or no curtailment. Nearly as large a space is filled by the unabbreviated replies of her chief correspondents, and there are occasional enclosures from other pens. In the result, the testimonies, which the Queen herself caused to be published, of her solicitude for the public interest, of her inexhaustible industry and tenacity, of her political vigilance, and of her frankness in criticism and censure, here receive highly important and often unsuspected corroboration. There is nothing to alter or correct the impression which has already been formed of the Queen's earnestness and energy. But there is an infinite deal of new evidence which confirms and finally establishes the accepted verdict that the Queen was no *reine fainéante*, but a monarch claiming political power with all the assurance of George III. or Queen Elizabeth.

One fully appreciates the difficulty of making a selection from such gigantic material as Queen Victoria's extant correspondence offers. Her love of detail and width of interest in persons and things constituted her by nature an exceptionally voluminous letter writer. With her numerous kindred of all degrees of relationship she corresponded through life with exemplary regularity. The royal governess, the Baroness Lehzen, received a weekly letter from her illustrious pupil during a great part of the twenty-eight years of her retirement, and it was only the Baroness's considerate request which led the Queen ultimately to extend the interval to a month. To even subordinate ministers of State the Queen would often write in seasons of crisis not once or twice a day, but ten or twelve times. At the outbreak of the Egyptian war of 1882 she sent Mr. Childers, the Secretary of War, no fewer than seventeen autograph notes in the working portion of one day in August. On the lowest estimate the Queen in the course of her life must have penned more than half a million letters.

The present editors have made their choice from only a portion of the Queen's correspondence, even of that belonging to the twenty-four years to which their labours are confined. They have, they tell us, solely exercised their discretion on "between five and six hundred volumes" of bound papers at Windsor, which contain letters addressed to the Queen between 1837 and 1861; some of her replies, returned to her by their recipients; rough copies of others of her answers; extracts from her diaries and various memoranda by herself and Prince Consort. A mass of the Queen's letters, belonging to the period, remains with the representatives of those to whom they were addressed, and no attempt seems to have been made to borrow the royal autographs which are not in the Windsor collections. The editors leave this exclusiveness unexplained. They implicitly disclaim access to correspondence outside Windsor, save in one instance, of which their mention takes a puzzling form. An ample and consecutive series of the Queen's letters to Lord John Russell for the years under survey are printed in these volumes. It is, consequently, perplexing to learn from a note to the Preface that a "set of volumes containing the letters from the Queen to Lord John Russell came into our hands too late to be made use of for the present publication." The little problem may admit of some simple solution. None is offered by the editors.

Although the editors' exploration has not extended to the whole field of research, they have garnered their sheaves from the stores at their command with no sparing hand. Few will question the real value attaching to their collection, and the public has been wise in extending to it a grateful welcome. Yet it is arguable whether its interest would not have been enhanced by more vigorous methods of exclusion and abbreviation. The first twenty-four years of the Queen's reign here yield some 600 letters from her own pen, and some 300

to 400 letters from the pens of her correspondents. On the same scale five more volumes would be required to complete the record of the remaining forty years of the Queen's rule, and 1,600 additional letters would be in reserve for us. So cyclopædic an epistolary presentment of a career might be appropriate in the case of a Frederick the Great or a Napoleon—of men who influenced the world's destinies and who transcended, in their personalities, the characteristics of ordinary humanity. But however eminent are Queen Victoria's titles to fame, neither her character nor her career was Olympian. There is no preserving salt of style in her correspondence. A disproportioned epistolary commemoration is to be deprecated. It will fall too easy a prey to Time's ravages.

It is only "specimens" or "typical instances" of the Queen's correspondence which the editors profess to furnish. They warn us that in seeking to illustrate her character and her "methods of dealing with political and social matters," they have borne in mind the requirements of "British citizens and British subjects" rather than those of "students of political history." One is indisposed to admit the justice of the distinction which is here drawn between the audiences whom the editors do and do not address. Their dividing-line seems to rest on a misapprehension of the quality of the wares which they purvey. Seven-eighths of the work deal with topics which are of small concern for the British citizen and British subject, save in his capacity of student of political history. The worshipper of the trappings of royalty will find comparatively little which is suited to his idiosyncrasy. In any case, the work deserves something more than the ephemeral success which is promised by the patronage of mere idle and obsequious curiosity. It is as a contribution to the study of politics that the book has value or claim to permanent interest. It must be judged by the amount of service that it renders the student of political or constitutional history.

If canons of historical scholarship be applied to the editorial method and *apparatus criticus*, these volumes cannot pass through the ordeal quite unscathed. As the letters stand, they form a less coherent series than the circumstances warrant or require. There is often a want of internal continuity in the chronological sequence of the documents which, in the frequent paucity of editorial annotation, obscures the progress of events and leaves the final issues undetermined. The editors seek to explain the array of broken threads by the questionable surmise that ultimate decisions were often reached in personal interviews and were not committed to writing at all. This was not the practice in the Prince Consort's day. Policy or expediency may have dictated a certain amount of suppression in these volumes, but there are crucial omissions which might have been supplied without offence, had a rigorous search been made, and there are repetitions which are purposeless and call for the pruning-knife. In view of the disjointed character of the compilation there is no compensatory advantage in reprinting papers which are already in print elsewhere. Amid the mass of new documents, any one who is acquainted with the political memoirs of the period will be disappointed to find that several of the most illuminating papers are old friends. Only the interesting series of letters which passed between the Queen and Lord Melbourne after his retirement from office, and between her and Lord Derby during his first ministry, are altogether new and serviceable to the historical student.

In dealing with the many letters which have already figured in Sir Theodore Martin's Life of Prince Consort, all that was needed was a note of their appearance in those volumes with an occasional summary of their contents. Again, it seems somewhat wasteful to fill numerous pages with the correspondence concerning an episode even of the significance of the ministerial crisis at the close of the year 1845, seeing that all the communications of importance which then passed between the Queen and her advisers have already been made public property in the Peel Papers. Some of the Queen's most interesting letters to Palmerston, Lord John

From the Picture by F. Winterhalter at Buckingham Palace.

"The Cousins." H.M. Queen Victoria and Duchess of Nemours.

(Reproduced from "The Letters of Queen Victoria," by kind permission of Mr. John Murray.)

Russell, and the Earl of Aberdeen are accessible in print in more than one earlier book. In all such cases stern editorial retrenchment was imperative. Occasionally the editors have employed the wise method of summarising documents which have previously been placed in the hands of the public. But the commendable practice is not applied systematically, and no exhaustive comparison would seem to have been made between the present collection of letters and the many previously published memoirs whose authors have drawn before on the same materials. This lack of consistent editorial method is responsible for superfluities and redundancies which swell the compass of the volumes.

Most readers, too, could have spared the repeated formulas of conventional courtesy which are inevitable in letters addressed to royal personages. Reiterated assurances in the third person of unabated zeal for the royal service and of dutiful devotion to Her Majesty's person which form the ordinary exordium and peroration of communications between ministers of State and their sovereign are rarely worthy of embalmment in print. The retention of an occasional specimen was all that was here required. The excision would give no ground for complaint, and would save many pages. *Μέγα βιβλίον μέγα κακόν* is not a maxim to be accepted without qualification. But nothing is gained and something may be lost by expanding a book beyond the limits which are required to fulfil its purpose.

The interest of this correspondence consists in the light it sheds on the place which the sovereign holds in the British Constitution. The conclusion to be drawn will commend itself neither to the courtier who is wont with wreathed smiles to hint mysteriously at the unimpaired strength, if not the omnipotence of the Crown, nor to the staunch Radical who is in the habit of asserting that the sovereign is a negligible factor in affairs of State. The Queen's letters confute with equal emphasis the two mutually contradictory maxims that the constitutional monarch reigns but does not rule, and that constitutional sovereignty resides alone in the popular vote. The paradoxes and anomalies in which the British Constitution abounds have never found more vivid illustration than in the Queen's epistolary intercourse with her ministers.

It is the central and the incontrovertible principle of the Constitution that the sovereign, in practically every relation of life, can only act on the advice of his ministers, and that he enjoys no personal responsibility for his conduct in public, or indeed in private, affairs. These letters owe their significance to their liberal illustrations of the Queen's frank impatience of the whole doctrine of ministerial responsibility. We know from other sources how her "good old baron" Stockmar, her husband's tutor in political and constitutional history, taught her to hold the principle mainly as a pious opinion, and how she and her husband chafed against it, while avoiding all public conflict with it. But the pages before us present her as privately resisting its application day after day and in intercourse with every one of her Prime Ministers. Constantly does she refuse to subscribe to ministerial decisions. Repeatedly does she inform her advisers of her resolve to withhold assent from any proposal of theirs to which she has given no independent consideration. On occasion she repudiates a ministerial plan altogether; she will "not contemplate the possibility" of it; she will not "become a party to it"; she is no "signing machine"; her authority is higher than that of the President of the United States (who, as a matter of fact, personally exercises all the supreme functions of executive government). Queen Victoria's tone of authority varies in strength with her personal interest in the question at issue. But the fundamental note, through girlhood and maturity alike, is an almost arbitrary assertion of personal volition.

There is some pathos in the long series of royal remonstrances with successive ministers whose advice under the Constitution almost amounted, however disguised in conventions of courtesy, to word of command, whose tenure of office was quite independent of royal approval, and whose acts, however repugnant to the Crown, were only revocable by a hostile vote of the Commons or the electors. The royal veto, which could alone make criticism effective, had been dead two hundred years. George III.'s practical power of interfering with the procedure and constitution of the Lower Chamber in the royal interest had been extinguished by the Reform Bill. No amount of admonition or dissent on the Queen's part could, under the law and order of the Constitution, mould or divert ministerial policy. Yet the incontestable fact barely qualified the constant stream of the Queen's protests.

It was inevitable that most of the Queen's protests should beat the air and expose her to (more or less) politely worded rebuffs. Palmerston usually put aside Queen Victoria's political counsels and adjurations with a barely civil expression of scornful irony, and at times neglected to consult her on questions in which she regarded her personal honour and dignity to be involved. Lord John Russell occasionally overlooked his Sovereign's repeated request that "her pleasure" should be taken before even a household appointment was gazetted. Yet the Queen had a specious justification for her persistency. Nominally, despite all statutory or traditional assertions of Parliamentary sovereignty, every operation of the executive government rested on her authority. All high officers in Church and State, in the Army and the Navy, owed their appointment in name exclusively to the Crown. Relations with foreign Powers were verbally represented as a personal expression of her will. She might well be pardoned if she sought to endow the artificial phraseology with some substance. The old fiction of regal omnipotence she could hardly champion, but she was easily misled into questioning ministerial predominance by the daily use of official language which bore no trace of the decay of the royal prerogative, and seemed designed to exalt its practical force. She still imagined that the Crown could raise reinforcements for the Army without appeal to Parliament, and that her disapproval

could prevent the House of Commons from inquiring into the exercise of the Crown's patronage. She had learned little from history, and was endowed with no vivid imagination. The obsolete formulas survived, and there was much to excuse her misapprehension of them.

In spite of constitutional limitations and legal restrictions, moreover, Queen Victoria still enjoyed a large measure of what Junius called "the mild and seducing dominion of influence." Futile as seems much of Queen Victoria's epistolary warfare with the democratic forces of the Constitution, her letters often hint that "influence" was, with her, no ineffective substitute for "power," even when her ministers were most openly questioning her claim to guide their deliberations. We enter a somewhat nebulous region of inquiry if we attempt to define the scope of Queen Victoria's "influence" as distinguished from her "power." But the merest glance will show that her "influence" was a reality while her "power" was a phantom, and that her "influence" enabled her to qualify here and there the working of the doctrine of ministerial responsibility, without weakening it in principle.

No human being of more than normal activity could quietly submit to the humiliating imputation that he or she was the kind of cipher, automaton, or puppet which political theorists represent a constitutional monarch to be in a democratic State. Constitutional ministers of a democracy would prove equally abnormal if they invariably pressed their constitutional responsibilities to the extreme limit of ignoring altogether the opinions or predilections of an unusually alert-minded and importunate sovereign. Forces of human nature preserve royal "influence" in a constitutional monarchy when royal "power" is dead and buried. In the higher regions of politics, royal "influence" may rarely find firm foothold. But there are numerous minor matters of administration—appointment to offices and bestowal of titular honours—which can, in certain contingencies, be left to the personal direction of the Crown, without prejudicing constitutional principle or practice. It may be only by ministerial indulgence that a constitutional monarch can actively direct or supervise official patronage, but in no sphere of government is royal "influence" more difficult or less necessary to resist than when it is exerted with Queen Victoria's industry, judgment and honesty.

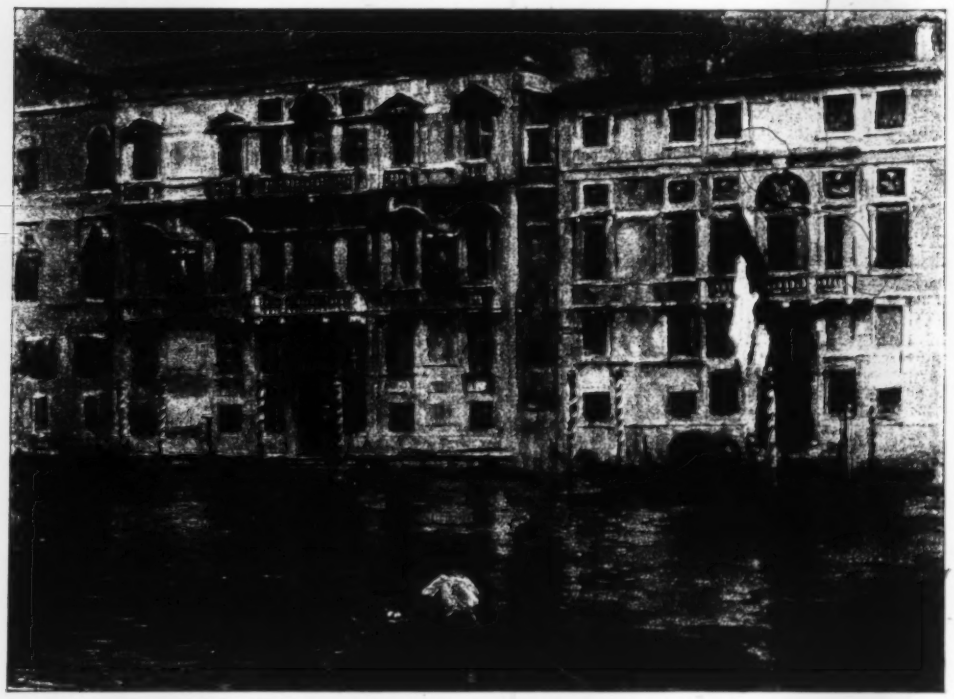
From the Picture by H. T. Wells, R.A., at Buckingham Palace.

Queen Victoria receiving the news of her Accession to the Throne, June 20, 1837.

(Reproduced from "The Letters of Queen Victoria," by kind permission of Mr. John Murray.)

The "influence" which attaches to the throne lost nothing of its potency during Queen Victoria's reign, despite the growth of that democratic spirit of the Constitution with which the Queen had no sympathy. The scope of royal "influence" varied from time to time, as it always will, with the temperament of the minister in power. But the constitutional checks always proved too active and abundant to permit any undue encroachment on ministerial responsibility, and contrived to confine the exercise of royal "influence" to spheres where it worked to the national advantage.

Some Colour-Books of the Season.



(From "The Old Venetian Palaces," by kind permission of Messrs. J. M. Dent & Co.)

THE DREAM-CHILD'S INVITATION.

By Alfred Noyes.

GIVE me one more hour, just one
Hour to hunt the fairy gleam
That flutters thro' this childish dream.
It mocks me as it flies, I know;
All too soon the gleam will go;
Yet I love it, and shall love
My dream, that brooks no narrower bars
Than bind the darkening heavens above,
My Jack-o'-Lanthorn of the stars;
Then, I'll follow it no more;
I'll light the lamp, I'll close the door.

The Forest of Wild Thyme.

I

Once upon a time!—Ah, now the light is burning dimly,
Peterkin is here again; he wants another tale!
Don't you hear him whispering—*The wind is in the chimley*;
The ottoman's a treasure-ship. We'll all set sail?

II

All set sail? No, the wind is very loud to-night:
The darkness on the waters is much deeper than of yore,
Yet I wonder—hark, he whispers—if the little streets are still as bright
In old Japan, in old Japan, that happy haunted shore.

III

I wonder—hush, he whispers—if, perhaps the world will wake again
When Christmas brings the stories back from where the skies are blue,
Where clouds are scattering diamonds down on every cottage window-pane,
And every boy's a fairy-prince, and every tale is true.

IV

There the sword Excalibur is thrust into the dragon's throat,
Evil there is evil, black is black and white is white;
There the child triumphant hurls the villain spluttering into the moat;
There the captured princess only waits the peerless knight.

Some Colour-Books of the Season.

(From "Italian Painters of the Quattrocento and Cinquecento," by kind permission of Messrs. Chatto & Windus.)

V

Fairyland is gleaming there beyond the Sherwood
Forest trees,
There the city of the clouds has anchored on the
plain
All her misty vistas and slumber-rosy palaces
(*Shall we not, ah, shall we not, wander there again?*)

VI

"Happy ever after!" there, the lights of home a welcome
fling
Softly thro' the darkness as the star that shone of
old,
Softly over Bethlehem and o'er the little cradled King
Whom the sages worshipped with their frankincense
and gold.

VII

Once upon a time—perhaps a hundred thousand years
ago—
Whisper to me, Peterkin, I have forgotten when!—
Once upon a time there was a way, a way we used to
know
For stealing off at twilight from the weary ways
of men.

VIII

Whisper it, O whisper it—the way, the way is all I
need!
All the heart and will are here and all the deep desire!
Once upon a time—ah, now the light is drawing near
indeed,
I see the fairy faces flush to roses round the fire.

IX

Once upon a time—the little lips are on my cheek again,
Little fairy fingers clasped and clinging draw me
nigh.
They are dreams, no more than dreams, but they unloose
the weary prisoner's chain
And lead him from his dungeon! "What's a thousand
years?" they cry.

X

A thousand years, a thousand years, a little drifting
dream ago,
All of us were hunting with a band of merry men,
The skies were blue, the boughs were green, the clouds
were crisping isles of snow. . . .
. . . So Robin blew his bugle, and the Now became the
Then.

SOME COLOUR-BOOKS OF THE SEASON.

THERE has been a good deal of wreckage on the rocks of technical education. The present writer's practical interest in colour-printing dates from watching an ineffectual sort of attempt that was made to establish a school of Chromo-lithography by a department of the Government many years ago. In the excellent studio provided with stones and zinc and every appliance to draw upon these materials, there was one difficulty charged with symbolical warning, to those of us who were interested in the experiment, if we had known it; and this difficulty was to get the windows effectively cleaned. The outside of the windows belonged to one Department, as we understood (we accused the Woods and Forests, quite unjustifiably), and the inside to another Department, and their ideas upon spring-cleaning were not synchronous; so the great sheets of glass never received that radical attention after all requisite, but were from time to time only partially renovated in appearance, like the attire of Reginald Wilfer. There was the same fatal dissociation of departments in the organisation of the little chromo-lithographic enterprise itself. It was very rarely that a student of exceptional energy was allowed to leave the aristocratic seclusion of the studio and penetrate into the purlieus of Red Lion Square; yet there in a paved yard overlooked by the backs of grimy warehouses, in a small building that was in fact a stable, there was the real shrine of the studio; and with apron girt on askew and rolled up at his capacious waist, with shirt-sleeves turned back at his elbows, and a pipe in his mouth, there stood the brawny arbiter of our lithographic destiny, to wit, the printer with his tins of colour and the press itself with its roller and "tympan." It was there, where were press and printer, that technical instruction should have commenced. The crucial process is that of printing, and it has been well suggested it is the printer himself who should be an intelligent artist.

Some Colour-Books of the Season.

(From "George Morland," by kind permission of Messrs. A. & C. Black.)

It is not likely that work of permanent value will result if there be dissociation of the artist or designer from the operations of the printer. Certainly it was foretold, in the beginning of chromo-lithography, that in time the artist's handiwork would be exactly reproduced by mechanical means, and therewith is the implication that an artist need not consider any exigency of the machine. But is this possible? Can the artist's touch, conveying indefinable qualities of atmosphere, of research, and of feeling, be reproduced by any alien hand, nay, even reproduced for the second time by his own hand? It is true colour-books are issued containing landscapes and other pictures that are triumphs of the printer's ingenuity: we give an illustration of this from Mr. Neil Munro's "The Book of the Clyde," in which one may see an example of the kind of painter's effect that can be reproduced now in printing. (See p. 124.) Yet the value of such pictures is really decorative. And any colour-publisher will say that he prefers work for reproduction that is what is technically called "tight" in execution, possessing a quality not pictorially beautiful, but that will ensure good printing. In demanding this, the publisher bears in mind that essential department of the press and the printer on which we have laid stress, but he is not asking for pictorial work at all. What he really wants is work decorative in kind, and designed for the machine process; and surely he is right.

Exactly the right kind of chromo-lithographed work was done, in the earlier days, in the famous "Paléographie Universelle" printed in Paris, in four folio volumes, about 1840. This "monumental" work contained reproductions of exquisite missal painting; and we remember, for instance, in the second volume, a Greek manuscript that was a beautiful piece of decoration, the letters being in gold upon an ivory-tinted ground, but with a capital in gold, white, green, and blue, and with a similar peacock-coloured inlay of Byzantine ornament in a small oblong panel near the top of the page: the original manuscript is at Florence. It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of reproductions of this kind. Like the productions of the queer Phytoglyphy, or Nature Self-printing, introduced about 1850, they may be said to have a root value, and unquestionably in such decorative and flat-tinted work the colour-printer engages in a beautiful and in a legitimate art.

Passing from chromo-lithography and zincography to other of the varied forms of colour-reproduction, the development of colour-printing was lately noticed by Walter Crane in his volume of "Reminiscences." He spoke of the cheap railway novels many of us remember, and tells us he used to design the covers of these books, which from their generally yellow hue and sensational character were commonly known among the designers as "mustard plasters." He had given up this work, and was designing the first of the children's books for which we are indebted to him, when he became the owner of a set of Japanese prints, brought home from Japan by a friend, a naval officer, who was not aware of their artistic qualities, but, says the artist wonderingly,

regarded them as mere curiosities. Mr. Crane insists upon the immediately helpful and suggestive stimulus to his work that these colour-prints gave. "I endeavoured to apply their methods to modern fanciful subjects and to the methods of wood engraving and machine printing," he says. His fine colour-book, "The Baby's Opera," was influenced by the Japanese prints. This preceded Kate Greenaway's dainty work, and it was later still that Randolph Caldecott brought out his colour-books. In France, inimitable child-character was portrayed by Boutet de Monvel. All these artists worked with a delightful economy due to their conquest of the means of representation and perfect understanding of their craft.

We can see the same economy in some colour-prints that have just reached us in a reprint of one of George Sand's books. Here we have a rural picture, wherein is the village maiden, her cousin, who somewhat resembles the hero of "Lorna Doone," and the little, misunderstood musician of the story. There is most satisfactory design in the little picture, there is character, and in addition there is an even lightness of tone that conveys to us something of the actual atmospheric effect in French landscape. (See p. 122.)

Again, the bizarre colouring of a plate from that English classic, "Alice in Wonderland," is excellently designed for the purpose of colour-printing, oddly reminiscent too, as it is, of the influence exerted by Mr. Sargent's art. (See p. 121.)

The ideal colour-print, however, seems to be achieved in many of Mr. Rackham's plates, and in those by Mr. Dulac. For the immortal Jackdaw in "The Ingoldsby Legends" Mr. Rackham makes a design worthy even of its subject. From the "Ghost" he takes a line, and adorns the book with a piece of exquisitely devised fancy upon this. The reader who is acquainted with Thaulow cannot fail to understand our meaning in looking at the drawing of the shed on the moor, when we say that something of Thaulow's quality is hinted at by Mr. Rackham in his picture of Tappington Moor. (See p. 125.) In Thaulow this quality was adorable; but no process interposed between us and the artist. How it comes about that Mr. Rackham can hint at it, and extract the quality from colour-process, must remain his secrete.

But if it is to this beautiful edition of "The Ingoldsby Legends" (which retains, by-the-bye, some of the familiar, charming old woodcuts), if it is to such a book we would point as an example of the result obtained where there is unity of art and craft and no dissociation of departments, not less would we admire the clever adaptation of Mr. Greiffenhagen's work to colour-printing. Here is fine decorative feeling brought to the service of "Ivanhoe"! The plate we give is naturalistic in treatment, and although the character is so marked as happily to illustrate this favourite episode in the story, yet it does not illustrate so well our theory of fitness as the rich little picture of Garth and Wamba, and some of the heraldic scenes.

Turning to "The Artists of the Renaissance," we would say, if we may do so without irreverence, that some of their pictures seem to lend themselves to colour reproduction very well, these being, in our view, such as have a pre-eminently decorative value. (See p. 117.)

Yet there are none of them that can compare with the colour plates by Mr. Dulac in the sumptuous new edition of "The Arabian Nights." Now we hope we shall not be understood as claiming superiority for Mr. Dulac over the old masters! Our contention merely is that Mr. Dulac lives in an age of machinery and Andrea del Sarto did not. We look back at the "silver grey, placid, and perfect art" of the faultless painter who never was excelled, and never can be; and listen wistfully for the sweet sound of that charméd song. But our young twentieth-century artist may not steal upon us with lute or viol; like, rather, another Hector Berlioz, his orchestra all those machines that he commands, he conducts his compositions, playing upon this machinery. In our opinion the technical limitations of colour-printing preclude it from competition in purely pictorial effects. Every art necessarily has its conventions, and the artist of distinction is he who is loyal to them, who by submitting sways. We repeat that colour-printing in itself may become a legitimate and beautiful art when it is rightly directed; and to this Mr. Dulac's plates will testify: let us particularly instance "The Maidens on White Horses," the King leading the unknown Princess to the Queen Pirouzé, and the delightful lady novelist, the fair spinner of tales, Scheharazade.

Not to be fanatically purist, however, let us conclude with a hearty appreciation of the new book upon Venice, which contains more pictorial studies. It is unnecessary to say that Mr. Okey writes with knowledge and enthusiasm, but colour-books do not always achieve the union we have here of admirably selected illustration with interesting letterpress. The colour-print reproduced from this excellent book shows us "Maddalo's great palace" where Shelley and Byron talked together. Byron lived in the palace from 1817 to 1819. (See p. 116.)

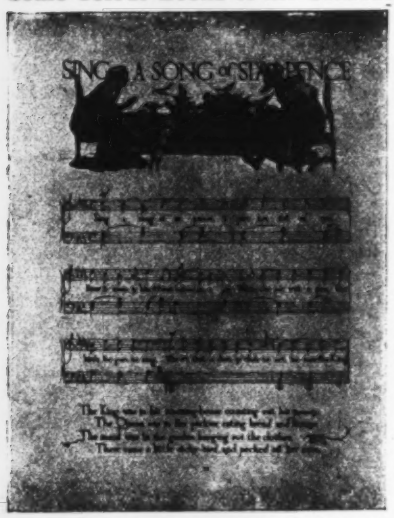
Some Colour-Books of the Season.

(From "Ivanhoe," by kind permission of Messrs. T. C. & E. C. Jack.)

CHARLES AND MARY LAMB'S 'TALES FROM SHAKSPEAR.'

By M. Love.

Some Colour-Books of the Season.



(From "Nursery Songs," by kind permission of Messrs. T. C. & E. C. Jack.)

MR. LUCAS'S volume containing the books for children, in his edition of the Lambs' works, together with the mass of childish literature which has of late been inundating the book-shops, has served to make one think of the difference in this respect between the condition of things now and in Charles Lamb's own day.

In a letter to Coleridge in 1802 Lamb compares the contemporary literature for children with the tales of his own childhood: 'Goody Two-Shoes,' he says, 'is almost out of print. Mrs. Barbauld's stuff has banished all the old classics of the nursery; and the shopman at Newberry's hardly deigned to reach them off an old exploded corner of a shelf, when Mary asked for them. Mrs. Barbauld's and Mrs. Trimmer's nonsense lay in piles about. Knowledge insignificant and vapid as Mrs. Barbauld's books convey, it seems, must come to a child in the *shape of knowledge*; and his empty noddle must be turned with conceit of his own powers, when he has learnt that a horse is an animal, and Billy is better than a horse, and such like; instead of that beautiful interest in wild tales, which made the child a man, while all the time he suspected himself to be no bigger than a child. Science has succeeded to poetry no less in the little walks of children, than with men. Is there no possibility of averting this sore evil? Think what you would have been now, if instead of being fed with tales and old wives' fables in childhood, you had been crammed with geography and natural history!'

Nowadays, it would seem, we have the stick by the other end. So far from pouring information as such into the infant mind, we are for reducing to the mildest possible beverage all the imaginative masterpieces in the language as fast as we can dilute them, in order that the inmates of the nursery may have no lack of nourishment in that direction. Why in the name of reason should we boil down 'The Water Babies,' for instance (originally written, be it noted, for babies), when there are plenty of nursery rhymes and old-time fairy tales to carry on the infant intellect to the point at which he will care for 'The Water Babies' as it is: and moreover, like it all the better for the difficult parts? Neil Munro's American child who says she particularly likes the bits she doesn't understand, 'but just almost understands,' speaks a wider truth than she knows. We most of us, as children, do not care for things made too easy.

But there are some books—some few—that can scarcely be begun too soon, and which, from their very being, are likely to be quite the last to be appreciated—and the plays of Shakspere are, I think, the first and greatest case in point.

Drama is hopelessly discouraging to most children, and that for several reasons. They love action, and description of action in a story, and not talk (as the Lambs knew very well), and a play seems all talk together. The form of it excludes explanations, the 'once upon a time' part, which arranges the story neatly in chronological compartments: Horace's 'medias res' theory is essentially a grown-up plan, and has no attraction for nursery folks—and moreover the blankness of the verse is the most irritating point of all. Good swinging rhyme is a delightful thing—but verse that *will* turn itself outside in to keep within a pattern, and yet has no clink at the end of the lines to compensate for the worry of making out the meaning, is entirely unreasonable—and quite justly so.

Charles Lamb and his sister had no specially close connection with children, but like some childless people, their understanding of them was peculiarly swift and fine. Of Mary Lamb in this aspect we do not know so much, except from her books written for them, but Charles's letter to Miss Wordsworth about her small nephew is ample evidence as far as he is concerned—not to speak of 'The Praise of Chimney Sweepers' and 'Dream Children.' All these are beyond praise for a certain quality of half-mocking tenderness, and playful gravity, which obviously exerted in their author a powerful fascination over the young folks of his acquaintance—witness the story of the small girl who stopped total strangers in the street to tell them that Mr. Lamb was coming to tea with her.

Lamb tells how the 'Tales from Shakespear' were undertaken, in a letter to Manning in 1806. 'She (Mary) is doing for Godwin's bookseller twenty of Shakspear's plays, to be made into children's tales. Six are already done by her; to wit, *The Tempest, The Winter's Tale, Midsummer Night's Dream, Much Ado about Nothing, The Two Gentlemen of Verona,* and *Cymbeline. The Merchant of Venice* is in forwardness. I have done *Othello* and *Macbeth*, and mean to do all

the tragedies. I think it will be popular among the little people, besides money. It is to bring in sixty guineas. Mary has done them capitally, I think you'd think.'

They were published in January, 1807, and achieved instant success, new editions being called for in 1810, 1816, and 1822—not to mention numberless others down to the present day. They have been translated into five languages at least, and have certainly been more widely distributed than any other of the Lambs' works. Charles's name alone stood on the title-page. He was exceedingly wroth over the illustrations (reproduced in Mr. Lucas's edition), which he succeeded in banishing from a part of the later issues; they were by Mulready, it appears, a struggling artist whom Godwin was anxious to help, and were engraved, it is said, by Blake. They are in any case sufficiently surprising, and whatever their merits or demerits, it is difficult to believe that they would aid the attraction of the book in the eyes of any human being. Lamb's letter to Wordsworth must be quoted (the bad baby is Mrs. Godwin): 'You will forgive the plates, when I tell you they were left to the direction of Godwin, who left the choice of subjects to the bad baby, who from mischief (I suppose) has chosen one from damn'd beastly vulgarity (*vide* Merch. Venice) where no atom of authority was in the text to justify it; to another has given a name which exists not in the tale, Nic Bottom, and which she thought would be funny, though in this I suspect *his* hand, for I guess her reading does not reach far enough to know Bottom's Christian name; and one of Hamlet and grave-digging, which is not hinted at in the story, and you might as well have put King Canute the Great reproving his courtiers.'

The offending 'Merchant of Venice' picture set forth Gratiano and Nerissa louting obsequiously low to a gigantic Bassanio and Portia and asking their permission to be married!

The Preface to the 'Tales,' of which the sister wrote two-thirds and the brother the remainder, is full of sympathetic grace, and insight into the child-mind, mingled with reverential love of Shakspere—and to begin to quote is to want to quote the whole of it. The authors apologise for the faults of the book, and explain to the children how difficult they found it to avoid continuous conversations: they must pardon it, says Mary, 'because it was the only way I knew of, in which I could give them a few hints and little foretastes of the great pleasure which awaits them in their elder years, when they come to the rich treasures from which these small and valueless coins are extracted; pretending to no other merit than as faint and imperfect stamps of Shakspear's matchless image.' And Charles sums up at the end the object of the book and the glory of Shakspere in the following words: 'What these tales have been to you in childhood, that and much more it is my wish that the true plays of Shakspear may prove to you in older years—enrichers of the fancy, strengtheners of virtue, a withdrawing from all selfish and mercenary thoughts, a lesson of all sweet and honourable thoughts and actions, to teach you courtesy, benignity, generosity, humanity: for of examples, teaching these virtues his pages are full.'

They wished to make the 'Tales' 'easy reading for very young people,' and to combine that with the keeping of the essential Shaksperean quality was sufficiently difficult: they were particularly anxious to tell not merely Tales, but to tell Shakspere himself, and they were most wonderfully successful. They contrived to keep to the very language of the play even in the explanatory parts, and especially perhaps in the Tragedies the whole thing is literally Shakspere. The Comedies, which Mary Lamb found very hard to put into the third person, are more conversational and have thus perhaps rather a freer air; but both in Tragedies and Comedies even the poetical pieces not specially helping the action are conveyed into the text; we have Portia's speech about mercy, and Pericles's over the wife whom he thought dead; we hear of the meeting between Cordelia and Lear in terms which are

Some Colour-Books of the Season.

(From "Alice in Wonderland," by kind permission of Messrs. Cassell & Co.)

Some Colour-Books of the Season.

(From "Les Maitres Sonneurs," by kind permission of Messrs. George Bell & Sons.)

Shakspere's and which are almost as moving in their prose context; of Lear's ravings in the storm; of the manner of Ophelia's death in the very words turned into poetic prose—Ophelia 'singing songs about love and about death, and sometimes such as had no meaning at all.' It is the contrast between the poetical bits and the more ordinary narration that produces part of the old-fashioned, many-coloured effect.

On the other hand Lamb altogether omits an outrageous horror like the blinding of Gloster, and does not tell how Cordelia died. The unnecessary undercurrents are left out too, generally, the 'humours' of the piece being oftenest done away with, no doubt as difficult to reproduce, and distracting to the story in its story form. The fairies remain, of course.

A child likes to know what the person who is telling the tale thinks about the people in it, and that is just what is wanting in a play; so the Lambs tell in the oblique narration what the characters are made of, either as Shakspere has it, in the mouths of the onlookers, or as Lamb and his sister themselves conceive it—and here we get small snatches of criticism interesting to watch for.

So we hear why it was that Cordelia thought 'the handsomest thing she could do was to love and be silent,' how in the person of Kent 'true love and fidelity are no more to be estranged by ill, than falsehood and hollow-heartedness can be conciliated by good usage,' how 'Hamlet's love for this fair maid came back to him' when he saw her burial.

In the same way Mary Lamb gives account of Petruchio in the happiest-sounding terms: 'He was a witty and most happy-tempered humourist, and withal so wise, and of such a true judgment, that he well knew how to feign a passionate and furious deportment, when his spirits were so calm that himself could have laughed merrily at his own angry feigning, for his natural temper was careless and easy.' 'The wild and witty Benedick' is a fascinating phrase, and 'Much Ado' is one of the best of the Comedies; one would think it a special favourite of Mary Lamb's. Canon Ainger in his Preface to Macmillan's Edition of the 'Tales,' quotes her analysis of Benedick's character, and remarks that she had not lived so much among the wits and humorists of her day without learning some truths which helped her to interpret the two chief people in 'Much Ado.' Undoubtedly her reading of Petruchio, Benedick, and Beatrice, three essential 'wits,' are among the best things she did, and brimful of humorous sympathy.

The authors of the 'Tales' themselves thought that 'Pericles' and 'Othello' were their most successful efforts, and who are we to dispute the verdict of those than whom no one could be better qualified to judge? 'Pericles' is instinct with the gracious serenity and the noble poetry of its original; the un-Shaksperean and unworthy elements are not there, and all that is there is full of calm ideal sweetness and light.

It is difficult to make choice amongst the Tragedies; the severity and grave austerity of 'Timon'; the poetic youthful charm of 'Romeo and Juliet'; the tragic terror of 'Lear'; Macbeth 'careless of life and wishing for death, sullenly waiting the approach of Malcolm'; the evil intellect of Iago: all are so skilfully suggested as to defy comparison with each other. Lamb becomes more explanatory on his own account in 'Hamlet' perhaps

Some Colour-Books of the Season.

(From "Stories of Roland," by kind permission of Messrs. T. C. & E. C. Jack.)

than in the rest; this partly because of inherent difficulties in the play, and perhaps partly too because there were certain elements in Hamlet himself that appealed very intimately to him. He says that 'the rough business which Hamlet had in hand . . . did not suit with the playful state of courtship, or admit of the society of so idle a passion as love now seemed to him' —and there is a reminiscence of the Essay on Shakspere's Tragedies in the explanation of Hamlet's harshness to Ophelia. It was one of the things in the play that Lamb found it hard to get over.

Again, he tells us how 'the mere act of putting a fellow-creature to death was in itself odious and terrible to a disposition naturally so gentle as Hamlet's was. His very melancholy, and the dejection of spirits he had so long been in, produced an irresoluteness and wavering of purpose which kept him from proceeding to extremities.'

These little asides which come in now and then remind us, in a simpler form, of the criticisms in the 'Dramatic Selections': there is everywhere the same kind of fine appreciation and discernment of the qualities of a character, and of affectionate understanding of the author's intention and desire—adapted, however, of course to the plan of a child's book.

It will be an ominous day indeed for children when, if ever, the 'Tales from Shakspear' go out of fashion as a nursery classic.

"THE BOOKMAN" PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

DECEMBER, 1907.

Answers to these competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and the address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 15th of the month to

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Warwick Square, E.C.

I.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

II.—A PRIZE OF THREE NEW NOVELS is offered for the most musical single line in Shakespeare's plays.

III.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best list of twenty nursery classics in English literature.

IV.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR NOVEMBER.

I.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best quotation from English verse has been gained by Miss JULIA SEVERN, Green Lane House, Audlem, Cheshire.

THE *TIMES* HISTORY OF THE WAR. REVIEW BY LIEUT.-COL. W. H. JAMES.

"My name is truthful James,
I am not up to small deceits or any sinful games;
And I'll tell in simple language what I know about the row."
—*Bret Harte.*

THE AMATEUR MOTORIST. BY MAX PEMBERTON.

"If I should chance to run over a cad,
I can pay for the damage, if ever so bad."
—*Clough.*

(Miss E. NEWTON, 3 St. John's Terrace, King's Lynn.)

A ROMANCE OF THREE. BY E. SCOTT.

"In Brentford town of old renown,
There lived a Mr. Bray,
Who fell in love with Lucy Bell,
And so did Mr. Clay."
—*Hood.*

A. JENNINGS, 11, Hastings Road, Ealing.)

THE WONDROUS WIFE. BY C. MARRIOTT.

"She who ne'er answers till a husband cools,
Or, if she rules him, never shows she rules."
—*Pope.*

(M. C. JOBSON, 19, Kent Road, Harrogate.)

ESSAYS. BY SIR R. C. JEBB.

"Two minds shall flow together,
The English and the Greek."
—*Cory.*

(MRS. ADAMS, 23, Tanza Road, N.W.)

II.—A PRIZE OF THREE NEW NOVELS for the best list of six familiar misquotations has been gained by MRS. C. T. ONIONS, 94, Kingston Road, Oxford.

1. Music *hath* charms to soothe *the* savage breast.
(Correct Version: Music *has* charms to soothe *a* savage breast.—*Congreve.*)

2. A little *knowledge* is a dangerous thing.
(Correct version: A little *learning* is a dangerous thing.—*Pope.*)

3. Water, water everywhere,
And not a drop to drink.
(Correct version: *Nor any* drop to drink.—*Coleridge.*)

4. Fall'n into the sere *and* yellow leaf.
(Correct version: the sere, *the* yellow leaf.—*Shakespeare.*)

5. None but the brave *deserve* the fair.
(Correct version: None but the brave *deserves* the fair.—*Dryden.*)

6. All things come to him who *waits.*
(Correct version: All things come *round* to him who *will but wait.—Longfellow.*)

Excellent lists were received from M. A. M. Macalister, Cambridge; Mrs. J. O. Arnold, Woodhouse, Sheffield; John Walker, Dublin; W. Murison, Aberdeen; "Jebed," Huddersfield.

III.—THE PRIZE offered for the best quotations applicable to six living humorists has not been awarded.

IV.—A PRIZE OF ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO "THE BOOKMAN" has been gained by ALFRED KING, The Cottage, Little Marlow, Bucks.

LEWIS CARROLL.

By R. C. Lehmann.

Some Colour-Books of the Season.

(From "The Clyde," by kind permission of Messrs. A. & C. Black.)

THE great English system of education is said to be at present in one of its transition periods. Middle-aged observers, who have lived through a considerable number of these periods, will smile the smile of cynicism when they hear this statement made. Have they not more than once seen Natural Science advanced to such a pitch of influence that every schoolboy was supposed to own his own private retort and to carry in his head knowledge that would enable him to reincarnate a mastodon from a footprint or to follow Arcturus on his headlong course through infinite space? Have they not, time and again, seen Greek tottering, with all its accents and particles, into oblivion, while Professors of English raised their heads and every undergraduate learnt to write his mother tongue either in faultless prose or in impeccable verse? *Plus ça change*, they will say, or words to that effect, *plus c'est la même chose*, and thus they will dismiss the subject from their minds and contentedly enter their latest male infants for Eton or Harrow or Winchester or Rugby.

We do not propose, in this place, to take a side in the Educational controversy. Yet we must in fairness admit that the existing system has a disconcerting trick of justifying itself, as it were, by paradox. It produces revolt as well as acquiescence. At one moment you may see it distributing conventional Judges and customary Bishops over a smiling land; at another, no doubt with a horrid creaking and grinding, it will throw off a Shelley or a William Morris, poetry, wall-papers, Socialism and all. It will turn you out a meek array of single-minded College lecturers, classical or mathematical, and then, tiring of the habitual, it will give you Charles Lutwidge Dodgson with Lewis Carroll thrown in.

On the one side, nothing could well have been more respectably distinguished from the unconventional than the circumstances and career of the Rev. C. L. Dodgson. He was the son of an Archdeacon whose grandfather had been a Bishop. Sound churchmanship and well-gaitered calves made an atmosphere of solid comfort for his earlier years. He went to a preparatory school at Richmond in Yorkshire, and thence in due time Rugby received him. From Rugby he passed on to Christ Church, where he was elected to a studentship in mathematics. He took a third class in "Greats," and a first in the Final Mathematical School. After this he became a mathematical lecturer in his College, wrote and published innumerable books on mathematical subjects (he had in the meantime taken Holy Orders), and so continued for some forty years, living the life of a bachelor don. He had been born in 1832, and in 1898, after a short illness, he died. These are the bare outlines of his career, and it must be admitted that no life could have been more rigidly and regularly collegiate. Here are the titles of some of his mathematical publications: "Notes on the First Two Books of Euclid" (1860); "A Syllabus of Plane Algebraical Geometry," systematically arranged with formal definitions, postulates and axioms (1860); "Condensation of Determinants" (1866); "The Fifth Book of Euclid Treated Algebraically, so far as it relates to Commensurable Magnitudes" (1868); "Symbols, etc., to be used in Euclid, Books I. and II." (1872); "Euclid and his Modern Rivals" (1879); "Curiosa Mathematica, Part I. A New Theory of Parallels" (1888). The list, to the unmathematical mind, is a formidable one. You would not suppose that the man who spent himself in condensing Determinants or evolving a new theory

of Parallels would have either the leisure or the inclination, or, finally, the capacity, to make poetry for children and to turn his fancy loose in Fairyland—yet this is what C. L. Dodgson, as Lewis Carroll, did with a success never surpassed or equalled.

Why, indeed, should he not have done it? The mere dabbler in mathematics (and we have ourselves dabbled in our time) may shrink appalled from the frowning craggy steeps that bar his progress; but the real mathematician will try to convince him that, when once these obstacles have been scaled, there is a world of romance and delight waiting for him beyond. Mathematics, he will be told, are in truth the noblest form of all poetry. He may urge in reply the argument that if mathematics ever produce any result in real poetry it is by depressing the mind and so causing a rebound to lighter things, but with the example of Dodgson-Carroll before him he will not be able to deny that a great mathematician may be a poet. In either way the irreconcilables are effectually reconciled.

It is useless, however, to spend more time in chopping psychological distinctions and attempting to separate the personalities of a single individual. We know that Mr. Dodgson was a poet, and that he lectured on mathematics and published treatises on various branches of that dark art. Charles Dodgson was, like many dons, a very shy and a very sensitive man, and a rigid observer of all the formalities of the life he had chosen. These characteristics may easily degenerate, through a pettifogging kind of reserve, into a complete ineffectiveness. From this premature extinction Dodgson was saved by his overmastering love for children. No sort of children came amiss to him. He found them on the sands, amongst the little actors in a pantomime, in a circus-tent, or in the venerable dwelling-place of the Dean of Christ Church, and in a moment he was their friend. Their innocent freshness and wonder charmed his mind, and their joy in clothing themselves in the garb of romantic pretence appealed irresistibly to his fancy. He took them by the hand and wandered through marvellous realms with these delightful companions. It was during one of these expeditions that "Alice" was created. On July 4, 1862, he makes this entry in his diary:

"I made an expedition up the river to Godstow with the three Liddells; we had tea on the bank there, and did not reach Christ Church till half-past eight." Later he added on the opposite page the following words: "On which occasion I told them the fairy-tale of 'Alice's Adventures Underground,' which I undertook to write out for Alice." Exactly three years after Miss Alice Liddell received her presentation copy of the immortal story from the author. In the poem that prefaces the book he sets out the manner of its telling:

"Imperious Prima flashes forth
Her edict 'to begin it'—
In gentler tones Secunda hopes
'There will be nonsense in it!'
While Tertia interrupts the tale
Not more than once a minute.

Some Colour-Books of the Season.

From "The Ingoldsby Legends."
(By kind permission of Messrs. J. M. Dent & Co.)

"Anon, to sudden silence won,
In fancy they pursue
The dream-child moving through a land
Of wonders wild and new,
In friendly chat with bird or beast—
And half believe it true.

"And ever, as the story drained
The wells of fancy dry,
And faintly strove that weary one
To put the subject by,
'The rest next time'—'It *is* next time!'
The happy voices cry."

How many editions of "Alice" have there been? Is there any European language into which it has not been translated? Millions of children (of all ages) throughout the whole world have been made happy sharers in the treasure first brought forth for the Liddells; and still the waiting millions call for it, and in various forms, the copyright being at an end, it pours from the press. For, besides being in itself a masterpiece, "Alice in Wonderland" had two additional pieces of good fortune. It had a sequel not inferior to itself, and, like its sequel, it was illustrated by John Tenniel, the one man who could do justice to it. The effect of Lewis Carroll and John Tenniel in collaboration was instantaneous and irresistible. It was emphasised by the success of "Alice Through the Looking-Glass," published in 1871.

Photo Shawcross, Guildford. **Lewis Carroll.**

We need not at the present day abandon ourselves to a detailed discussion of either "Alice." When you have said that a diamond is, in fact, a diamond, you have said enough. The rest may be assumed. Of this sort are the "Alices." They have the necessary amount of fancy, imagination, whimsicality, humour, poetry, and romance to be literary diamonds. You want no magnifying lens to pry into their brilliance. The naked eye is sufficient.

Dodgson was, of course, no mere 'prentice-hand in literary workmanship when he wrote "Alice." From his early years he had shown a gift for writing. He had contributed to *College Rhymes*, a Christ Church periodical, to the *Comic Times*, and to the *Train*, London papers of a wider circulation, and, as we have said, he was a prolific writer of mathematical treatises. We are not stretching probability too far when we assume that the necessity for absolute precision and clarity which is entailed by the exposition of mathematics helped to form the style in which the "Alices" are written. If you are to hold the attention of children, you must express your meaning as clearly and concisely as possible and in the simplest words. Nothing else that Lewis Carroll wrote afterwards came near to the success of "Alice." "The Hunting of the Snark" has a few memorable phrases which are still quoted; "Sylvie and Bruno" is but a pale and ineffectual reflex of the former books. But to have written the "Alices" is a sufficient glory for any man. This will remain to him when his other efforts, including his mathematical treatises, have passed away and been forgotten.

Dodgson must not be set down, however, as lacking in humour and tenderness outside the region of his relations to children. Some of the letters published in Mr. J. Dodgson Collingwood's excellent "Life and Letters of Lewis Carroll" (Fisher Unwin, 1898) show him, on the contrary, to have had an abounding and general sense of fun. Here is a passage describing an incident in his travels with Dr. Liddon in 1867:

"We moved on to Giesse and put up at the 'Rappe Hotel' for the night, and ordered an early breakfast of an obliging waiter who talked English. 'Coffee!' he exclaimed delightedly, catching at the word as if it were a really original idea, 'ah, coffee—very nice—and eggs? Ham with your eggs? Very nice——' 'If we can have it broiled,' I said. 'Boiled?' the waiter repeated, with an incredulous smile. 'No, not *boiled*,' I explained—'*broiled*.' The waiter put aside this distinction as trivial. 'Yes, yes, ham,' he repeated, reverting to his favourite idea. 'Yes, ham,' I said, 'but how cooked?' 'Yes, yes, how cooked,' the waiter replied, with the careless air of one who assents to a proposition more from good nature than from a real conviction of its truth."

There are other passages equally good, but space fails us for quotation.

Finally we may note that he was a strong opponent of vivisection:

"Who preach of Justice—plead with tears
That Love and Mercy should abound—
While marking with complacent ears
The moaning of some tortured hound."

These are lines from "Fame's Penny Trumpet," a scathing attack on vivisection written by Dodgson. With this we may leave him. No marble monument to him is necessary. He has his special place in the heart of every child that has read his two imperishable books, and countless shrines of that sort are still preparing for their gentle occupant.

"THE FLESHLY SCHOOL OF FICTION."

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE, AND A REPLY BY "A MAN OF LETTERS."

ELLEN THORNEYCROFT FOWLER (Mrs. A. L. Felkin).

I sympathise most heartily with all those who disapprove of "The Fleshly School of Fiction."

In the first place, I think that this school is artistically incorrect. Nowadays the passion for so-called "realism" is becoming a positive obsession; and modern writers seem to forget that it is possible to be so accurate as to become untrue. Art deals with *effects* rather than with *details*; and to paint a thing exactly as it *is* frequently makes it appear precisely as it *isn't*. For instance, a skilfully touched-up photograph is generally a far better portrait than a snap-shot taken by an amateur. A kodak in the inexperienced hands (say) of an irresponsible brother is a cruel and a fearsome thing: yet its results must in their very nature and essence be *realistic*; but they certainly are not *artistic*; and heaven forfend that they are true to life!

In the second (and more important) place, I deprecate the influence of "The Fleshly School" because I consider that it inculcates the dangerous and depressing and deleterious habit of always looking at what is diseased and sinful and abnormal. Not being a Christian Scientist, I do not deny that there are such things in the world as disease and sin: but they are not the most important nor the most permanent things: disease and sin are the abnormal, while health and righteousness are the normal conditions of mankind as originally created. Thus why should fiction present to the world at large a false and pernicious view of life and human nature, by giving such undue prominence to the abnormal and the exceptional and the transitory? Being a practical person, I do not deny that in every inhabited house as at present constituted, there must be a coalhole and a dustbin. But what man in taking a photograph of his own home would place these "realities" in the foreground of the picture?

Those of us who are old-fashioned enough to read "Dickens," will realise that the dark sayings of Mrs. Wilfer with regard to her "under-petticoat" are of wider and broader application than was dreamed of in that excellent lady's philosophy. Even though we "know it's there," we may find it "more delicate and less personal" on our part to avoid allusions to anything about which it is neither pleasant nor profitable to talk. And those of us who read a still more old-fashioned writer than Dickens, will remember that the best prescription ever written for the sound mind in the sound body ran as follows:—"Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

ELLEN THORNEYCROFT FOWLER
(MRS. A. L. FELKIN).

A. W. PINERO.

I don't read much fiction nowadays, but I have made it my business to glance at some novels belonging to the Fleshly School. One of these, written by a lady and put forward boldly as the work of the greatest living English novelist, would, in respect of its composition, reflect small credit upon a kitchenmaid. As to certain details of the story, few kitchenmaids, I trust, could be so depraved as to conceive them. Such productions are, in my opinion, most pernicious. They owe their vogue, which is unquestionable, to publishers without conscience and reviewers without honesty or without brains. Let intelligent and high-minded critics take a firm stand against this stuff; or, better still, let editors of first-class journals forbid all mention of it in the columns of their papers. Then it would be strangled at its birth.

ARTHUR W. PINERO.

ROBERT HUGH BENSON.

It is excellent to think that THE BOOKMAN has drawn public attention to a public danger. It does not seem to me that the primary danger lies so much in the subjects treated of as in the manner of treating them. To show a disgusting thing to be disgusting may be a fine and a necessary work; but to show it as being harmless or praiseworthy, or even as essentially attractive, appears to me simply diabolical. This, it seems to me, is what renders many moderately discreet books so extraordinarily injurious. It is not mock-modesty that is wanted, but cleanliness of mind.

ROBERT HUGH BENSON.

TO MY CRITICS.

I thank you all, ladies and gentlemen, whether agreeing with my protest against unclean fiction, or led to qualify it on grounds that seem in certain eyes valid. My acknowledgments are especially due to Miss Corelli for her strong and timely words, which will penetrate into regions where I have no access. But allow me some brief concluding remarks.

Whenever this question comes up we may expect to be told, that we who condemn such works of darkness (1) are mere Puritans, (2) and enemies of great Art—with a capital letter, (3) and ought to read only a Bowdlerized Shakespeare, (4) and make the "young person" our standard in literature. One man pleads in the *Daily Chronicle* for "pictures taken from life";

another appeals to "common sense." It is likewise an excellent Knight's move to say, "I have never looked into the novels to which you allude." In short, either the evil does not exist, or it has not come our way, or it is not evil, or the world will have it so, and *que voulez-vous?* A smile, rather of contempt for the "airship of Sir Walter," in which I, the Puritan, sail away from fact; a shrug as at my stupid innocence, refreshing but out of date; and there's an end on't.

To which heads of criticism I answer: that if every man who brings literature under ethics, precisely as he brings speech, business, love-making, and "quidquid agunt homines," is to be called Puritan, call me such. I shall be proud of the name. Moreover, I contend that the finest "Art" has ever been ethical, not because it put on a plusquam American profusion of drapery—the undraped can be purity itself—but because it has been wrought in obedience to high ideals and has strengthened the moral fibre in those who studied it. How this effect shall be gained; what are the limits of subject, choice of colours, liberty in detail, cannot be laid down beforehand; but we all know when the god inspires and when the beast has mastered the god. In my twelve novels there could be no mistake about the essential bestiality which dictated them. Evidence in a popular magazine like THE BOOKMAN, it is clear that I ought not to give; some crimes find protection in their foulness; and these are of them. I will say, however, that I submitted three of the twelve to a well-known authoress, who writes for the stage, an accomplished woman of the world; and that she returned them in disgust, remarking, "This is simply dirt." I had picked out the least offensive. Judge what the others must have been. Am I likely to advertise them by printing their titles here? But, mind, the books command a circulation, some a large one, and in the sixpenny form.

All the same, you cultivated persons retort, "Ah, but Shakespeare? but Fielding? but this classic and that?" Did you never hear, I reply, the Latin proverb, "Assueta non movent," what we are used to makes a faint impression? On the whole, no one broods over those things in famous old authors of which they ought to have been ashamed. To all intents we ourselves Bowdlerize by passing on, caught up in the mighty impetus which makes for morality. It is not the classic that corrupts; either its less edifying pages moulder, neglected; or the bad in them charms no more. Vice tricked out in the latest fashion, with infinite particularity, with rouge on its cheeks, in an atmosphere as intoxicating as poisonous—that is something different from a mellow classic, or a topshelf antique, perused mostly by scholars. I speak of stories written by modern women for women, or by living men for as many as they can get to read them. If you Bowdlerized these volumes, nothing would be left. How much need you take out of Shakespeare to satisfy sound ethics? Do I, then, banish Art from the homes of England because I counsel it not to be prurient and unclean?

Lastly, there is the terrible "young person," whose existence, paradoxically enough, has become a godsend to all the lovers of dubious literature. Shall we revere in *l'ingénue* our only Muse? I never said so. But even *l'ingénue* ought to be protected. Miss Corelli refers to the scandalous love-correspondence in which Signor Scarfoglio, "ex-husband of Matilde Serao," has figured. To-day I hear that in Italy a national League is forming among parents "for the defence of good morals"; and that its manifesto was posted up last week all over Rome. "The new era," says this document, "which was meant to be one of civilisation, progress, and freedom, is leading our children from youth up to rebel against authority and scorn morality. A licentious press, with obscene illustrations, is circulated everywhere under the eyes of the young, and contamination follows. The theatre reproduces the worst phases of a rotting society, paints adultery in glowing colours, excuses and sometimes glorifies crime, and turns into ridicule all that a decent man should respect." French and Belgian societies, by no means exclusively Christian, have taken up this subject, in alarm at the growth of juvenile lawlessness. There is an immense output of infected and infecting "literature" (save the mark!) abroad. It is spreading at home. I ask again, do we want the unclean thing to flourish among English women, lads and lasses, in the name of art, Shakespeare, and common sense? If not, my protest is justified. A MAN OF LETTERS.

New Books.

PICCADILLY.*

Books about the London of past years, describing the vicissitudes of its streets and houses, and tracing the connection of its most illustrious inhabitants with particular spots, have always enjoyed a considerable vogue. Within the last twelve or eighteen months several more or less meritorious works of the kind have been published, but it does them no injustice to say that not one of them can compare for literary excellence with this delightful volume of Mr. Street's. Not for a long time have we come across so attractive a performance in its own class. Mr. Street has found a thoroughly congenial subject (not always an easy thing for a fastidious man to find), and he has done it, and himself, full justice. His tone and style of treatment are admirably suited to his theme, for his writing is like the talk of an accomplished and educated man of the world, while a fine tact, a judicious reticence, a humorous yet kindly judgment, are apparent in every sentence. The preparation of the book must have involved much labour, and the information it so gracefully imparts is drawn from a great variety of sources. But the results of Mr. Street's research sit lightly upon him, and the highest praise which can be bestowed upon his labours is that they give the impression that the author wrote because he had read, and not that he read in order to be able to write.

* "The Ghosts of Piccadilly." By G. S. Street. 10s. 6d. net. (Constable & Co., Ltd.)

As a specimen of Mr. Street's happy way of putting things, take this summary of George Selwyn: "A benevolent figure, greatly loved, full of humour, and yet having about him withal a faint, vague, intangible suggestion of the sinister." Who has not been conscious of the suggestion without being able to give it a name? Or take these sentences on the Devonshire branch of the great Cavendish family: "There seems ever to have been a sort of dignified reticence about [them] which greatly impresses me as a man, but rather baffles me as a scribbler. 'The roaring generations flit and fade,' and there is ever a Devonshire filling his eminent position, calm, retiring, imperturbable, and never an amusing thing to tell of any one of them." Could the genius of this illustrious house have been more felicitously summed up in any number of words? But it will not do to begin to quote, and it is equally out of the question to enumerate the men and women of distinction whom Mr. Street finds occasion to weigh in his balances, always saying what you feel at once to be the true thing, and saying it with an urbanity as exquisite as it is rare. The chapters on "Old Q.," on Sir Walter, and on the Great Duke strike one as perhaps showing Mr. Street at his best. He will have nothing to do, by-the-bye, with the silly and rather tiresome paradox that Nelson more truly represents the normal type of Englishman than Arthur Wellesley. "He can never stand for such a rounded type of Englishman," says Mr. Street. "The men had one thing in common, that both were quickly emotional: but Wellington was the lord of his emotion, and Nelson was the slave of his." There you have the truth as in a nutshell, to the discomfiture of our enthusiastic and rather noisy geniuses who believe that Johnson's Court was called after the great lexicographer.

Old "Q"

(Reproduced from "The Ghosts of Piccadilly," by kind permission of Messrs. Archibald Constable & Co.)

Now for a word or two of "criticism." It seems a pity that in dealing with "Albany" (for it seems that we must omit the definite article) Mr. Street should have omitted all mention of the set of rooms where John Douglas Cook and his successors edited the *Saturday Review*: surely a suggestive enough subject for at least half a chapter in Mr. Street's most characteristic vein. We do not agree with him that Harriet Wilson's notorious Memoirs are "a most amusing book." Four more disappointing little duodecimo volumes (or is it six? it is long since we came across them in a country-house library of the old-fashioned kind) we have seldom attempted to read, though of course they contain here and there a certain amount of curious information. We are surprised to find Mr. Street using horrible words like "visualise" (p. 139) and "forceful" (p. 157). There is, if we mistake not, an error in the spelling of Monckton Milnes's name on p. 56. But, that said, all that is to be urged by way of disparagement is exhausted. Let us hope that Mr. Street will see his way to extend the range of his literary exercise to other portions of London not less deserving of attention and not less adapted to his peculiar gifts. No one among contemporary authors possesses his indescribably suave and masterly touch in dealing with social history.

It should be added that the interest of the volume is enhanced by a dozen excellent reproductions of portraits, entirely in keeping with and appropriate to the text.

J. H. MILLAR.

SARAH BERNHARDT'S MEMOIRS.*

Their serial publication in the French press has robbed Mme. Bernhardt's Memoirs of most of their freshness. That was only to be expected. Sarah Bernhardt is not only the most popular actress of two continents, she is also a figure of world-wide celebrity, round whose name has gathered a whole cycle of legends. Hers is one of those commanding personalities that impress themselves on the imagination of the public; like Gladstone, Bismarck, Garibaldi, the Kaiser, the American President, Tolstoi and Patti, to quote a heterogeneous list of famous persons of modern times, she has become a household word, alike in Europe and America. There must be thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of people who have never seen the actress in any of her best-known parts—Phèdre or Fédora, Marguerite Gautier or the heroine of "Frou - Frou," Magda or Adrienne Lecouvreur — and yet are profoundly interested in Sarah Bernhardt the woman. Her incalculable temperament, her eccentricities and caprices, her violent outbursts of rage, her quarrels and her reconciliations, her travels and her hairbreadth escapes from perils, her coffin and her menagerie, have won her fame, or at any rate notoriety, with hosts of newspaper readers who are quite indifferent to the art of the theatre. These devour greedily any anecdote about Mme. Bernhardt that appears in the public journals, and the press carefully caters for their tastes. No sooner, therefore, was any instalment of the actress's reminiscences published in feuilleton form, than the more piquant portions were straightway copied into every European or American newspaper. Hence it happens that all Sarah Bernhardt's best stories, all her frankest confessions and criticisms, have been made familiar alike to the admirers of her art and to "the man in the street," long before these memoirs were issued to the libraries as a collected volume. Those, however, to whom the book comes as a novelty, will find it entertaining almost from cover to cover; it is only the record of its author's first American tour, forming the last chapters of the volume, that proves rather tedious reading; and on every page of the autobiography, which is sometimes audaciously candid, and nearly always sprightly and chatty, will be discovered some self-revelatory detail.

Yes, Sarah Bernhardt tells us much about herself in her reminiscences. She speaks with an agreeable straightforwardness about her weaknesses and prejudices, her superstitions and her tantrums, her struggles and her triumphs; but though all these reminiscences bear the stamp of Sarah's own personality, in her case, as in the case of every other successful man or woman, it is the early days, before life's battles had been won, which furnish the

* "My Double Life: Memoirs of Sarah Bernhardt." 15s. net. (Heinemann.)

Sarah Bernhardt, in the hands of her coiffeur; before going to the Conservatoire examination.

(Reproduced from the "Memoirs of Sarah Bernhardt," by kind permission of Mr. Wm. Heinemann.)

most interesting chronicles. There is a certain monotony about the history of such an unbroken series of successes as has fallen to this great artist's lot ever since she conquered Paris and London. This triumphant Sarah we know well, but grateful as we are to her for hours of pleasure in the playhouse, it is not she of whom we wish most to hear. It is rather the lonely little girl who so quickly recognises that the pretty mother she adores has no love for her, but lavishes all her store upon the child's sister. It is the convent-school miss who longs to take religious vows, yet causes the nuns endless anxiety by her alternate fits of mischievousness and temper. It is the timid, hysterical young creature whose career is settled for her without her having a say in the matter, and merely by reason of a few words of the Duc de Morny. It is the agonised débutante who, at more than one first night, makes but a half-success and is uncomfortably reminded of her thin arms, her slim figure, and her general lack of plumpness in face and body. It is the actress of promise who has to fight against managerial cabals and cliques which favour her rivals. Happily, it is just of herself in such youthful manifestations that Madame Bernhardt provides the fullest information.

Next to that section of her book which describes her girlhood and her stage novitiate, the most readable chapters of the memoirs are those which contain anecdotes of the distinguished personages the actress has known. All the more famous of her colleagues at the Comédie Française figure in these pages, as well as all the prominent playwrights of the time. Naturally there are many references to Sophie Croizette, Sarah Bernhardt's chief rival, but they are all of them kindly. Apropos of Croizette and "L'Etrangère," the play of Dumas fils's in which their rivalry at the house of Molière came to a head, Mme. Bernhardt has two amusing stories of her relations with the younger Dumas. One is the story of her going to him after her quarrel with Croizette, and pouring upon him the vials of her wrath, which he took in good part. The other tells how when, through failure of memory, she cut out a whole scene from "L'Etrangère" and afterwards apologised to its author for what she had done, Dumas said, "My dear child, when I write a play, I think it is good; when I see it played, I think it is stupid; and when any one tells it me, I think it perfect, as the person always forgets half of it." For Augier Mme. Bernhardt had no love, but she writes cordially of both François Coppée and Victor Hugo. Hugo it was who sent her, as a tribute to her acting in "Hernani," a tear she caused him to shed—in other words, a diamond drop; she says she liked to look at Théophile Gautier and to listen to Victor Hugo. Coppée she helped to secure his first hearing in "Le Passant," and she compares his "handsome face, emaciated and pale," with "that of the immortal Bonaparte." Poets and dramatists, managers and players, were not Sarah's only associates. She met Louis Napoleon both before and after his *coup d'état*. The Emperor once caught her practising a curtsey in the throne-room. Of the Empress Eugénie she declares that no sooner did her Imperial Majesty speak than the spell of her beauty was broken. "That rough, loud voice, coming from that brilliant woman, gave me a shock."

To students of the theatre the quaintest passage in these Memoirs will prove that in which Mme. Bernhardt passes in review the most famous players of her time, and estimates their merits. She begins by remarking that on the stage a man loses his chivalry—the actor becomes jealous of the actress. Then she names four chivalrous actors—Pierre Berton, Worms, Antoine and Guitry. M. Guitry, she says, is both an actor and a comedian, and she adds that she knows few stage artists who are also comedians—whatever the term "comedian" may mean:

> "Henry Irving was an admirable artist, but not a comedian. Coquelin is an admirable comedian, but he is not an artist. Mounet Sully has genius, which he sometimes places at the service of the artist and sometimes at the service of the comedian; but on the other hand, he sometimes gives us exaggerations as artist and comedian which make lovers of beauty and truth gnash their teeth. Bartet is a perfect comedienne, with a delicate artistic sense. Réjane is the most comedian of comedians, and an artist when she wishes to be."

Then follows this pronouncement on the Duse:

> "Eleonora Duse is more a comedian than an artist; she walks the paths that have been traced out by others; she does not imitate them, certainly not, for she plants flowers where there were trees, and trees where there were flowers; but she has never by her art made a single personage stand out identified by her name; she has not created a being or a vision which reminds one of herself. She puts on other people's gloves, but she puts them on inside out. And all this she has done with infinite grace and with careless unconsciousness. She is a great comedian, a very great comedian, but not a great artist."

One opens one's eyes at such sweeping generalisations, and recalls Signora Duse's Mirandolina in "La Locandiera" as an example of her creative genius, and her Silvia in "La Gioconda" as an exquisite revelation of her own personality.

Mme. Bernhardt's frank comments on her stage contemporaries make it seem strange, at first sight, that in these Memoirs she should allude so rarely to the technique of her own art. But that, according to a statement she herself is credited with, is to form the subject of a companion volume.

F. G. BETTANY.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL'S REMINISCENCES.*

Every man, as Carlyle or another has said, possesses the wherewithal in his life and experience for one valuable book. It is a lamentable fact, however, that those who have most to tell have often the least aptitude for telling; whereas those with least to tell can tell it best. If we could all produce the one honest book which is supposed to lie ready for the writing in our souls, what a plethora of good literature our descendants would rejoice in! For the honest books would be not vague but substantial, concerned less with vague speculations about the universe, the whence and the whither, than with actions and concrete things. Several philosophers would be gladly sacrificed, by most of us, to save a Pepys, a Froissart, a Boswell, or even a Joinville. So highly preferred is he who has done, seen, and suffered to him who has merely thought.

Few men in these times have been more favourably placed for seeing than the Duke of Argyll. He began life with a father keenly and variously interested in his day and generation, the friend of many conspicuous men. He inherited and has cultivated a large variety of inclinations. He has been politician, administrator, companion of the great, librettist, poet, story-writer, traveller and sportsman. He has moved in Royal circles, and may have penetrated some of the mysteries of journalism. He is, in short, what is called a many-sided man. With the opportunity for making acquaintance with several contrasted worlds he has combined the talent and aptitude for making much of it. So lavish an endowment lays him under a heavy responsibility to posterity. "Here," with a sort of perspective sympathy one can fancy posterity saying—"here was a man who should have left us recollections of importance, compared with his rather exceptional capacity for sketching descriptions of those whom our benighted forefathers considered great men, profitable glimpses into those dark ages of human society which fancied themselves civilised and marvellously progressive—here was a potential Pepys."

Let us shed a tear for the disappointment of our descendants who may discover this book in an old lumber-heap in the year 3007! The Duke of Argyll has had the opportunities of seeing and hearing. He has used those opportunities; has displayed a laudable anxiety to know the best that has been thought and said and been in his times; and this—this indigestible hotch-potch of ill-assorted atoms—is the literary outcome.

If the Duke could not write, we and posterity might pardon him. But he can write. True, he shows a fine aristocratic disregard for the rules of grammar and the principles of verbal logic. That, however, is a small matter compared with his rather exceptional capacity for sketching a portrait in a few sentences. We, at any rate—never mind our descendants for a moment!—are delighted to read of Lord Brougham that, "if he was not always jumping up and down himself, *toto corpore*, his remarkable nose was," and that "it was a nose that jerked, and perked, and quirked, and wagged any way, with varying emotion." There is a Dickens touch of caricature in the description, yet it remains essentially true, and is certainly vivid. Then it is pleasant to hear that Prime Minister Andrassy "looks very weary, with dark, cavernous eyes, black hair and whiskers, no moustache or beard, and a rather peaked, dusky nose; he has had to make all the arrangements, which have been so successful, and is, as he says, 'tired to death'"—and, in the next paragraph, that Count Beust "always looks clean and well washed, and has the habit of licking his lips quickly." These little bits of portraiture—yes, I am sure posterity also should be grateful for them—were either written or fixed on the mind's sensitive plate in youth. The Andrassy and Beust sketches are extracted from the Duke's diary, whence also comes the sketch of Bismarck: "He has grown stouter, but holds himself as erect as ever. He was very breathless after coming up the stairs, his eyes watered a good deal, and his look of a gallant great mastiff filling up the sofa was more marked than of old." Bismarck thought, by the way, that "Lord Salisbury ought to have half an hour every day under a drill-sergeant, to improve the appearance of an English representative statesman."

Are not these the very "trivialities" one loves to read a hundred or two years after they have been written?—the sort of things which outweigh the most masterly disquisitions on foreign policy and the duties of the nations "at this present juncture"? Reading the diary extracts and then turning to the matured portions of the book is like passing from a Velazquez to a bad process-block.

One cannot read the book without being struck by the pitiable waste of good material which it represents. Personally, I do not object to a go-as-you-please volume of recollections. I am no stickler for the concurrence of events being strictly observed in such an undertaking. But between a little amiable literary Bohemianism and the out-at elbows, down-at-the-heel slouch affected by the Duke of Argyll in the present pages is all the difference in the world. The reader has to jump, with what agility he can muster, from Armada wrecks to mid-Victorian postillions, from Scotland to Africa, from America to Germany, from the year eighteen hundred and something to the year eighteen hundred and something else, and back again before he has had time to get his breath and feel at home, till finally he

From the portrait by Jules Bastien-Lepage. **Sarah Bernhardt.**
(Reproduced from "Memoirs of Sarah Bernhardt," by kind permission of Mr. W. Heinemann.)

* "Passages from the Past." By His Grace the Duke of Argyll. With two Photogravure Plates and other Illustrations. 2 vols. 24s. net. (Hutchinson.)

is compelled to career wildly from a Government Blue-book on the progress of Uganda to the complete text of the Duke's brief comedy, "The Coach and Six," as performed at Inverary, and from that—a less perilous but more fatiguing jump—to the libretto of "Diarmid," an opera written by our author and composed by Mr. Hamish McCunn, two pages on "Opera in England" bringing him to a melodious conclusion.

We need not excite ourselves over the Duke's literary confessions. If he really considers Browning and Mr. Swinburne minor poets, why grumble at his honesty in putting them under that heading? If Wordsworth's poetry seems to him "placid, philosophic stuff, fit gruel for mental invalids"—if he believes that "nothing could incite Wordsworth to vivid poetry"—if he doubts whether "Wordsworth could do more than raise a smile of sympathy from the benevolent," whereas "Arndt could raise the spirit of a nation"—let him by all means set it down in good plain print. To every man his opinion. We can have ours.

On another point there can be no two opinions. It is not permitted to man to spell the name of R. L. Stevenson "Stephenson," nor to commit, or allow his printer to commit, so many other mistakes of a similarly heinous kind. On second thoughts I retract the alternative. Surely the Duke will not, like lesser mortals, lay all the blame on the printer.

THOMAS LLOYD.

A NOVEL OF CRUELTY.*

There are some books which strike one not as works of genius (to use the cant literary phrase), but as works with genius in them. The author possesses some genius, one feels, but either it is incomplete, even within its boundaries, or else it has not succeeded in freeing itself from baser metal. "Furze the Cruel" is not in itself, as it stands, a work of genius; it is not a masterpiece; but undeniably a good deal of something very like genius has gone to its making. It reminds one somewhat of "Wuthering Heights." In that, there was genius throughout; the moorland wind swept through the *dramatis personæ* as well as across the scene; it shrivelled some, inspired others, vivified the whole book. In this, the evidence of genius is sporadic; the dark wild wind of Dartmoor blows grandly at times, with astonishing impressiveness; but there are backyards, so to speak, where the author cannot feel it—though doubtless it is there just the same. In "Wuthering Heights" the great passions were as elevated as the evil passions were deep. In "Furze" the evil passions are grimly, tenaciously, powerfully depicted; the great passions are tamer and more conventional; they are on a lower plane.

> "The Poet gathers fruit from every tree,
> Yea, grapes from thorns and figs from thistles he,
> Pluck'd by his hand, the basest weed that grows
> Towers to a lily, reddens to a rose."

So should the novelist; so does the novelist of complete genius. "Mr. Trevena's" thorns and thistles are magnificent growths; his grapes and figs, though always wrapped in his terse, racy style, are more like those you can buy at the literary provision-merchant's. He plucks weeds uncommonly well; weeds they remain, for the most part. Effectively, there was nothing petty in "Wuthering Heights," but only too frequently Mr. Trevena interrupts or rounds off a fine disquisition or characterisation with a remark, a gibe, an expression of mere irritation, the pettiness of which gives one somewhat the same sensation as a boxer kicking. When the Pope is speaking *ex cathedra*, he must not interrupt himself to say his shoe pinches. Perhaps the pinch is first in importance to him at the moment, but it is not so to the faithful. If a novelist claims—as Mr. Trevena does very freely—the right to hold forth on his own account, it is at his peril that he sinks below his best. A little lapse can sully so many pages of high thinking.

What "The House with the Green Shutters" was to the Kailyard school, "Furze" is to the tragedy and clotted-cream school of West-country fiction—but more so. It errs, if at all, on the other side of reality. There is little of that set eloquence, that verbal band-playing, to which Devonshire has given rise. With apparent carelessness, without greatly checking the action or checking at all his flow of rather savage humour, Mr. Trevena reveals the moor in a multitude of quick glimpses which *make* us realise and picture it, not only because of the descriptive skill, but because, when descriptive matter is so embedded in the story, we cannot skip it as we skip those aforesaid band-playings and adjectival fireworks. He, as it were, grows his characters out of the moorland soil; they form an ascending order, from Peter and Mary Tavy, the savages of Ger Tor, who appear on the moor like sinister outcroppings, natural agents of nature's malice, but are grotesquely absurd in contact with civilisation; through Thomasine, the farm wench who is all body and no mind; through the awful midwife baby-murderer of the "rotten core of Devon"; through Pendoggat, a religious scoundrel of the forcible West-country, as opposed to the slimy urban type; through Brightly, the harmless, wretched, purblind rabbit-skin merchant whose contact with rural justice is such a satire on it; through various other characters, mostly combinations of knavery and foolishness, or foolishness and good intentions; to Boodles, the heroine—illegitimate, and no man's child, humanly speaking, but a very winsome, very unconventional daughter of the moor, full of life and at times greatly pathetic. It is a fault of the book that, though Boodles is the brightest thing in its pages, her story is overshadowed by the secondary but more convincing story of Pendoggat, his bogus nickel-mine, and his mistresses.

The moor's spirit of cruelty—"the dominant note of all things"—is incarnate in a varying degree in all these characters. To Pendoggat, cruelty is a lust; in others stupidity; even Boodles is unwittingly cruel, forced thereto by nature. Mr. Trevena says in a prefatory note:

> "Almost everywhere on Dartmoor are Furze, Heather, and Granite. The Furze seems to suggest Cruelty, the Heather Endurance, and the Granite Strength. The Furze is destroyed by fire, but grows again; the Heather is torn by winds, but blossoms again; the Granite is worn away imperceptibly by the rain. This work is the first of a proposed trilogy, which the author hopes to continue and complete with 'Heather' and 'Granite.'"

He has looked for cruelty, therefore, and well has his search been rewarded. Abel Cain Weevil, Boodles' foster-father, had the eye for cruelty abnormally developed; he called it the Brute, and everywhere the Brute met him; but he was only a tender, foolish old man who wrote letters to the newspapers about it. Mr. Trevena hunts down the Brute with a hue and cry. Throughout "Furze" there runs a malignant undercurrent of cruelty which breaks out into ghastly floods. Worse still—and this, it seems to me, is the cardinal defect of the book, taken alone—the spirit of cruelty appears to have entered into the author also. He is neither aloof nor impartial, as we should expect an author to be with such a subject. He not only depicts relentlessly, as he is justified in doing, the cruelty of his characters; he treats *them* cruelly, lashes them for it with a fierce glee; seems, indeed, to have a spite against them. He takes up a side; makes *ex parte* statements.

> "Not a Dartmoor commoner would pause for a moment to regard the sun setting and glowing in a mist upon the tors. Yet a Cornish fisherman would; and a Norman peasant perhaps would take off his hat and cross himself, not so much with a sense of religion, as because there is something in his mind which can respond to the beauty and poetry and romance of the sun in a mist. Possibly, with the Dartmoor commoner, it is his religion which is to blame. His faith is as dark and ugly as the bottom of a well. The Cornish fisherman has his Cymric blood, his instincts, his knowledge of folklore, to help him

* "Furze the Cruel." By John Trevena. 6s. (Rivers.)

through. The Norman peasant has the daily help of gleaming vestments, glowing candles, clouds of sun-tinted incense—pretty follies perhaps, but still pretty—the ritual of his mass, and the Angelus bell. But the Dartmoor commoner has little but his hell-fire."

Is that true? Is there nothing better to be said for the commoners?

"Drunkenness is not a vice upon Dartmoor; nor a fault even. It is a custom."

"He was hardly expected, because promises are meaningless phrases in the mouths of Dartmoor folk. In the matter of an eternal 'to-morrow' they are like the Spanish peasantry. They always promise upon their honour, but, as they haven't got any, the oath might as well be omitted.... The Dartmoor conscience is a beautiful thing. It urges a man to act precisely as he wants to."

"West-country beauty is nothing but fair hair and tinted skin."

There are plenty of Dartmoor folk, no doubt, of whom those statements are true. But is that the whole truth? Is it not part of "the exaggeration of Dartmoor, which exaggerates everything, adding fierceness to fierceness, colour to colour, strength to strength, just as its rain is fiercer than that of the valleys, and its wind mightier"? Are such statements deliberately or are they unintentionally partial? That is the real point. For we are told that "Furze" is the first volume of a trilogy. It may be meant to stand alone, to be complete in itself. If so, its sincerity is vitiated by cruelty and injustice, by a lack of charity and of breadth. Or does Mr. Trevena mean to complete the picture, to correct the bias, to exhibit the more admirable qualities of Dartmoor folk—in "Heather" their endurance, and in "Granite" their strength? We shall see, and meanwhile look forward almost with anxiety; for "Furze" is an original, a frank, and a powerful piece of work which suggests that its author might exercise a decidedly bracing effect on English fiction. We shall see, also, whether "Furze the Cruel" is the product of a genius truncated or as yet immature, or whether it is merely the revenge of an outraged sensibility. Its singular intensity, its pitiless insight, its pathos, and its faults even, must arise from one of those two causes.

STEPHEN REYNOLDS.

THE SWAN OF LICHFIELD.*

This is an amusing, but somewhat unusual book. It is the chronicle of a coterie in a small cathedral city in the eighteenth century, as existed in many other provincial towns of the period, such a coterie of well-to-do people with literary leanings, but no especial gifts, that novelists have so often chosen for their character-studies and satire. But a true and not unkindly record of such a clique written by a man sensible of the humour of the thing is a novelty that we do not remember to have met with before. Mr. Lucas, who has seen the funny side of this mutual admiration society—a sort of Della-Cruscan academy—has drawn up its history for the entertainment of others. We doubt, however, if the subtlety of the thing will be generally appreciated. He admits on the first page that as he proceeded with his book, Miss Seward, the Swan of Lichfield and the central figure of the group, became too much for him, and he was compelled to give her the place of honour. We fear that the Swan will also claim a victory over many of the readers of this book. So accustomed have we been to have the histories of great geniuses and their adherents, of the circles of Pope, Addison, Johnson, Horace Walpole, of Lamb, or of Scott, that the simple annals of this middle-class settlement of mediocrities will probably be regarded by many who take up this volume as very like a joke. The fact is, he provides the material for laughter, but he does not point out wherein the humour lies—*that* he leaves to the reader, and it is his fault if he doesn't see the fun. It is almost a platitude at this date to say that Mr. Lucas writes well. His work is so good and his taste so sure that he is certain of success where others cannot possibly avert a failure. His gifts are especially noticeable in the present work; he has succeeded in spite of the difficulties of his subject, and his peculiar method of treating it. Entertaining, however, as this book undoubtedly is, it would have been better had it been cast in a different form. Mr. Lucas has such a conscientious regard for original documents that he rarely paraphrases when he can quote. He has, we think, been over-zealous in this regard. What we would like to have had is an account of the Lichfield circle in Mr. Lucas's own words, not in the letters of Miss Seward and others. He tantalises us with his comment: it is excellent, but too sparingly meted out, and may be compared to a fine silver thread appearing here and there in yards of Anna Seward's fustian. Mr. Lucas's admirers may wonder if his habit of making anthologies has not so grown upon him, that he has almost unconsciously compiled an anthology of Sewardian "beauties." After his labours on Lamb, one cannot help regarding him with mixed feelings of admiration for his temerity in embarking on his task, and a sympathy for having read through the voluminous correspondence of the Lichfield Swan. But apparently he went to his labours quite cheerfully, and with his eyes open. He knew what her verse was like, and he describes her at the outset as "the last and greatest of the unhumorous women." For poor Sir Walter Scott Miss Seward's pen had no attractions. Mr. Lucas quotes the following letter to Lockhart in which Scott describes his feelings:

"The despair which I used to feel on receiving poor Miss Seward's letters, whom I really liked, gave me a most unsentimental horror for sentimental letters. The crossest thing I ever did in my life was to poor dear Miss Seward; she wrote me in an evil hour (I had never seen her, mark that!) a long and most passionate epistle upon the death of a dear friend, whom I had never seen neither, concluding with a charge not to attempt answering the said letter, for she was dead to the world, etc., etc., etc. Never were commands more literally obeyed. I remained as silent as the grave, till the lady made so many inquiries after me, that I was afraid of my death being prematurely announced by a sonnet or an elegy. When I did see her, however, she interested me very much, and I am now doing penance for my ill-breeding, by submitting to edit her posthumous poetry, most of which is absolutely execrable."

It may be prejudice on our part, but we must confess we never could abide Miss Seward—good woman though no doubt she was; her morbid sentimentality and gush, her utter lack of humour and wit, the absurd affectation of her style of writing, and her comfortable respectability repel us. She had foibles such as vanity and a preference for decent people with competencies—vice she had none, or even common failings; but it is easier to forgive vice than such foibles, because vices are generally the result of character, whereas foibles seem due to habit. Mr. Lucas, however, is thoroughly loyal to his Swan, and as he warms to his work he develops a liking for her, while by the time he has reached her last will and testament he has attained a positive state of tenderness.

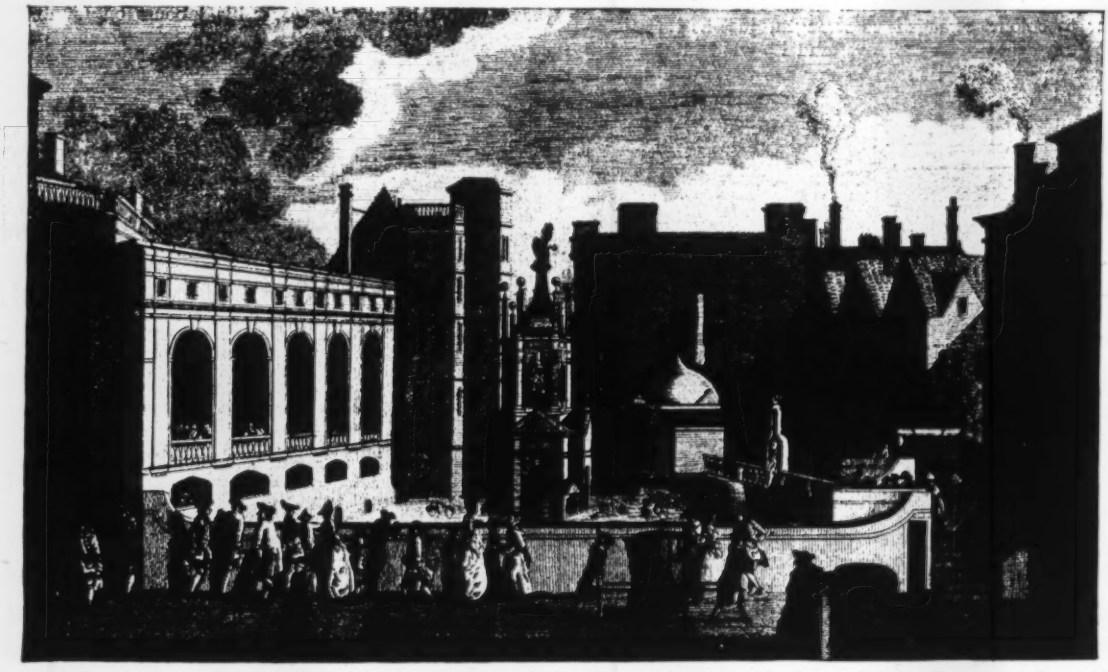
THE BEAU OF THE BATH.*

It is not for a son of Bath to suggest that, in this latest of Mr. Lewis Melville's gossipy and entertaining volumes, there is more about Bath than about Beau Nash himself; nor shall the present reviewer ever be induced to admit that too much could be written and printed in praise of the genial city which fostered his own youth. And, indeed, what amateur philosopher, conscious of his own mortality, could fail to find inspiration and food for thought in that grey-eyed city of dead memories, perpetually dreaming of her glorious past? Upon the stones of Bath the *memento*

* "A Swan and her Friends." By E. V. Lucas. 12s. 6d. net. (Methuen & Co.)

* "Bath under Beau Nash." By Lewis Melville. 15s. net. (Eveleigh Nash.)

mori of the eighteenth century is indelibly engraven. Her stately terraces, climbing the hill to Lansdown; her dusty Assembly Rooms, in whose corners the faint aroma of patch and powder still hangs evanescently; the long and spreading parade of Pulteney Street, where beauties were wont to flash glances from the shelter of their sedan-chairs—every street and alley of the old town tells of the passing away of the glories of youth and beauty. Her alleys, above all; for there, where the wealthy Trim built himself a comfortable mansion, shop and tavern fronts are driven through the elegant, eighteenth-century façades of Wood and Baldwin, Attwood and Eveleigh, and dirty children play at diabolo with disused cotton reels on the pavements once trodden by Webster and Beau Nash himself. And higher up, by Queen's Square and the Royal Crescent, all that is left of society is the little company of half-pay officers who potter off at noon to play bridge at the Club, or maiden ladies of uncertain income, flitting in and out of residential hotels with dowdy reticules on their wrists, and asthmatic pug-dogs panting on a string behind them. "The Vanity of Human Wishes" might have been dedicated to the Queen of the West, so emphatically does she preach the gospel of supersession.



The King and Queen's Baths, including the Great Pump Room at Bath.

In the niche on the right-hand side is a statue of King Bladud, supposed to have been the first discoverer of these Baths, 863 years before Christ. (Reproduced from "Bath under Beau Nash," by kind permission of Mr. Eveleigh Nash.)

Nevertheless, it remains a delight to think of her as she was, and, such as she was, it was Richard Nash who made her. Mr. Melville does right, therefore, to speak voluminously of the city which was his hero's pride, for just as it is impossible to think of Bath without Beau Nash, so would it be a barren task to tell of Beau Nash without celebrating the city of his affections. And very cleverly has Mr. Melville done his work. Some of it has, perhaps, the air of having been got up for the occasion, and much of it is already more than familiar; but there are a glow and a glamour about old and new, and in the matter of writing and arrangement this book seems to me, if I may say so without impertinence, the best of all its author's rather prolific monographs. Mr. Melville has searched far and wide, and he has got his material into capital order. The book goes with a "snap" from start to finish.

And what of the Beau, the presiding genius of all this faded company; how does his reputation wear after a century and a half? It is clear that Mr. Melville has more than a little tenderness for the old man's foibles; and so, surely, must every one who, born into these unromantic days, still cherishes an imaginary predilection for "the ruffle's flutter and the flash of steel." Like all leaders of the gayer world, Nash thought well enough of himself, and, like most men of gallantry, he was not above sacrificing a heart to his own conveniences. But in an age when manners were still held to make the man, he offered an example of courtliness and chivalry unsurpassable even among his contemporaries. He was a gamester, to be sure, and the tables brought him low at the last; it must have been a degradation to his high spirit, indeed, to accept subscriptions for a book he never meant to write, in order that his old age might be provided with common necessaries. But many a better man of his time was gamester too, and not one of them lost his money with an easier grace, or "played the game" with more perfect equanimity. This book is full of lively stories of his wit and readiness, of his short way with a boor, or his tenderness to the oppressed. If he spent money freely upon himself, he was at least eagerly generous to his friends. And, even where he was most despotic, he ruled his little kingdom in the common interest.

> "Voluptatum arbiter et minister,
> Sed gravis, sed elegans, sed urbanus,
> Et in summa comitate satis adhibens severitatis,
> Imprimis curavit,
> Ut in virorum et feminarum cœtibus
> Nequis impudenter faceret,
> Nequis in iis quod inesset
> Impuritatis, clamoris, tumulti."

So runs his epitaph, and, for a master of ceremonies, what better epitaph could there be? And upon the city of his adoption his mark is to be found on every hand. In Mr. Melville's own words—

> "The Theatre was his residence for many years; the existing Pump Room is on the site of the older building where he held his court, and whence he promulgated his laws; the lecture-room of the Literary Institution was the ballroom of Harrison's Assembly Rooms over which he ruled with despotic

power. There, in the Grove, is the obelisk he erected to commemorate the stay of the Prince of Orange; and there, in Queen's Square, is another which he placed in memory of Frederick, Prince of Wales."

Nor is his best memorial written in stone. The true power of Nash's influence is shown in the fact that he has had no successors. "Heu, heu, numquam posthac habitura parem," Bath had to lay aside her garlands, when once her great dictator was dead. Her history since then is one of mild and dignified decay. ARTHUR WAUGH.

"LOVE OR THE PARISH?"*

I am rather afraid Mrs. Baillie-Saunders will find that, in providing an uncommonly good time for her readers, she has provided a time of a very different sort for herself. Once, a long while ago, I knew a journalist who made fun of Women's Clubs; he wrote an article about them, in which he said that the members were always quarrelling with each other, and that they used to steal the soap and take it home with them. For a week or more afterwards, the columns of the paper in which that article appeared were dark with letters from women who belonged to clubs, and the things they said about that journalist ought to have brought blushes to his cheeks; they denied everything, and eagerly invited him to go to their clubs and point out any one woman who had ever misappropriated a cake of Brown Windsor. I don't know whether he went; but I sometimes fear the worst, for I have never seen him since.

And Mrs. Baillie-Saunders' descriptions of the Hoyden Club, and her caricatures of certain of its members, are more vivacious and more amusing than anything that was done in that way by the unfortunate journalist who so mysteriously disappeared soon after he had done it. I call them caricatures, but the worst of it is that the pictures are true—it is the women themselves who are caricatures: they are not the whole truth—nothing is; but they are the whole of one side of it. The other side is not made up of caricatures, but of real, unaffected, sensible, good-looking, lovable women. They are in a minority, and will not be amongst the members who will resent Mrs. Baillie-Saunders' strictures—they will, indeed, be the first to admit that her sketches only seem satirical because they are so shrewdly and vividly lifelike.

However, "A Shepherd of Kensington" is not primarily a story of London Club life, though the Hoyden Club and certain women amongst its members play a prominent part in it. The main interest of it all centres on James Cartyn, vicar of St. Chad's, Kensington, and on Mary Fresne. Mary has been living in the parish for some year or so past; she is a young widow, and nobody knows anything of her except that her husband had been a soldier and had died in India leaving her a small annuity of fifty pounds. After service in the church one evening, a Mrs. Courtman, a handsome and wealthy lady of fashion, comes to the vicar in the vestry in a highly emotional state and wants to ease her conscience of a troublesome burden. She tells him that a few years ago, when she was living in India, she cruelly slandered another woman; she had been in love with that other woman's husband, and had written to him privately, whilst he lay on what proved to be his death-bed, exaggerating an innocent indiscretion of his wife's, so colouring and shading it that he was convinced of his wife's infidelity and altered his will, leaving all his fortune, with the exception of a fifty-pound annuity, in the hands of trustees, who were not to hand it over to her until she could convince them that she was guiltless. And now, her better self wakening under a temporary religious influence, Mrs. Courtman is haunted with regrets and desires to make atonement; but when the vicar tells her that the only way in which she can atone is by going to the unfortunate woman's trustees, confessing everything, and so clearing the other's character and restoring her fortune to her, the sinner waxes indignant and will not hear of it. She will salve her victim's wounds with money, she is more than willing to make her a comfortable allowance if it can be arranged, but no arguments or reproaches can move her to humiliate and shame herself by openly confessing to the shabby and contemptible sin of which she had been guilty in the past.

The vicar's lips are, of course, sealed: he cannot betray her confidence; and though he sees her from time to time and tries his utmost to urge her to the doing of what is just and right, she is not to be persuaded; and he is not the less earnest in his endeavours when, his acquaintance with Mary Fresne ripening, it becomes evident to him that she is the woman whom Mrs. Courtman has wronged. Mary is a very gracious and winsome type of womanhood, and almost before he is aware of it his interest in her and his sympathy with her are absorbed into a feeling that is deeper and stronger than either. On his recommendation she is engaged as secretary of the Hoyden Club; and when, as a consequence of subtle rumours of that old scandal about her, she is dismissed from her employment, he thrusts all his hesitatings aside, tells her of his love, and asks her to marry him. He knows she is innocent, but cannot honourably tell her how he knows; and because it would ruin his career if he alienated his parish by marrying a wife with such a reputation as overshadows her, she rejects him, and thereafter, to guard against his weakness as well as her own, she quits her lodgings and does not let him know where she has gone.

It is this crisis that moulds the mere priest into a man. That fear of his people had been his own fear too, but now he flings it to the winds. "He now knew that, for all his self-defences, her eyes had been like two soft grey stars round which the world went dancing, for which his pulses went racing. Which would it be—Love or the Parish?" So far, the spiritual theories of religion, the beautiful formalities of his priestly office have contented him, but now they seem hollow and inadequate, and he inveighs bitterly against "we inhuman, theoretical parsons, with our little empty rules and notions, busy tithing our anise and cumin, a little here and a little there, and forgetting the great tragedy of human experience!" Love opens his eyes and shows him that in the past he has been a good deal of a prig; it broadens his mind, and humanises and makes a man of him, and sets him yearning to share the fellowship of common humanity: "To be one with London!—one with the faults and miseries of it, after all! Not a little plaster demi-god in a parish niche, but a shepherd who at least lives with his sheep, and feels with them, fights the same things with them! It is almost worth losing what I have lost. And, good God, what I have lost!"

But in the end he gets all that he had seemed to lose and more. It is a very brightly and cleverly written story. There are poignant touches of pathos, and Mrs. Baillie-Saunders has what is supposed to be rare in women, an abounding sense of humour. I am not at all sure that the two descriptions she gives of the parson's typical wife are not as wicked as they are laughable, but I would sooner leave parsons and their wives to settle that point between them. A. ST. JOHN ADCOCK.

* "A Shepherd of Kensington," by Margaret Baillie-Saunders. 6s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

NEW POEMS.*

When, one begins to wonder, shall our poor day cease to be reminded of its poetic sterility? Great poetry is dead; it is the era of Lilliput. The plaintive cry is repeated again and again, cynically, remorsefully, pessimistically, 'Even the few poets we have merely concern themselves

* "New Poems." By Herbert Trench. (Methuen.)

Photo by Fred. Hollyer. **Mr. Herbert Trench.**

with cunning and exquisite verse; it is all veneer; there is no true blood beneath the rouge.'

Could any criticism be less true? The main tendency of the poetry of to-day is entirely in the contrary direction; is towards truth and energy rather than sweetness and delicacy. The effort is to compel language to express the thought, the emotion; to refuse the trivial finish; to leave the work in its life and rough simplicity. Mr. Sturge Moore, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Doughty—are any other names needed? And now what more obvious and characteristic a quality than this is there in these new poems of Mr. Herbert Trench?

Indeed, here and there, in the volume, the roughness and looseness of phrase and metre seem almost an intentional blemish, being neither essential to the idea nor to the feeling which is expressed: as, for instance, in the fourth stanza of "The Voice on the Column," and in the poem to Tolstoy. But this can be said only of quite a small part of this fine, original, vivid work.

Immortality, valour, man's inconceivable powers, his utter impotence, his isolation, his hope—these are Mr. Trench's themes in an age when the only poetry we are said to possess is pretty and superficial!

Every one who cares for poetry and is loyal to the hopes of his own generation must read this book, and it is therefore quite unnecessary to stumble through a prosaic analysis of the longest poem in the volume—"Apollo and the Seaman." It opens with headlong simplicity, after the manner of the old Scottish ballads:

> "Apollo through the woods came down,
> Furred like a merchant fine,
> And sate with a sailor at an inn
> Sharing a jug of wine."

And, thus launched, forward the story goes without pause into a strange, elusive, imaginative talk between these two chance companions concerning the wreck of "that great ship Immortality," haling from

> "Some harbour of the East
> Back o' beyond, back o' beyond."

"What was her build?" Apollo asks the seaman:

> "'O, her stretch of sail, so white, so white,
> By no man's hand unfurled,
> Was Heaven!'
> 'And the decks you kept so bright?'
> 'Were like this bustling world.'
> 'And the hold and cockpit out of sight,
> Pitch dark and ill to smell,
> Full of the friends of your delight?'
> 'That was the pit of Hell!'"

Even this brief extract reveals the depth of thought and the metaphysical subtlety underlying the romance and glamour of ship and inn, with the seas of infinity breaking under its very eaves.

To me the most beautiful thing in the poem is Apollo himself. For here it is indeed a god, sitting openly and convivially in the tavern, though never a word of description is spared him. We realise in that odd profound clairvoyance which only clearest imagination can awaken, his beauty, his unearthliness, his power and divinity. And who would foresee, from the rich, elaborate, complex verses that follow, the simplicity of the close? It is all beautiful, and as rich in thought and imagination as it is beautiful.

There are many other poems in the volume. One or two of them, we think, suffer from over-emphasis, and are a little burdened by the author's unusual gift of language. This occurs only, perhaps, when the emotional impetus is not quite so personal, and when the thought is too involved or discursive for imaginative clearness of presentation.

Well, we shall still continue to be told our poets are merely pretty versifiers; but the vane of opinion may be stuck due south when a north-west gale is blowing.

What might we not quote from such true, sincere, beautiful work—"Jean Richepin's Song," the exquisite "Song," "An Ode to Beauty"? Let it be this:

> "I heard a soldier sing some trifle
> Out in the sun-dried veldt alone;
> He lay and cleaned his grimy rifle
> Idly, behind a stone.
>
> "'If after death, love comes a-waking,
> And in their camp so dark and still
> The men of dust hear bugles, breaking
> Their halt upon the hill,
>
> "'To me the slow and silver pealing
> That then the last high trumpet pours
> Shall softer than the dawn come stealing
> For, with its call, comes yours!'
>
> "What grief of love had he to stifle,
> Basking so idly by his stone,
> That grimy soldier with his rifle
> Out in the veldt, alone?"

The silence of the vast sunlit veldt, the endless tenderness of love, the marvellously remote music, the strange heedlessness that yet seems to listen; to transmute all that into these few beautiful words—such is the art of poetry which the world of to-day apparently is content to scorn and ignore.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

THE GENTLEST ART.*

Letter-writing is in a fair way to become one of the lost arts. It is being killed by science in the guise of telephone and telegram, and by the modern passion for dispensing with leisure. No one in a hurry can write a letter that shall be worth the reading. We owe therefore a deep debt of gratitude to Mr. Lucas for the delightful volume in which he has enshrined some 150 specimens of the "gentlest art." He has spread his net widely; his correspondents range from Cicero, Pliny, and Seneca to Marjorie

* "The Gentlest Art. A Choice of Letters by Entertaining Hands." Edited by E. V. Lucas. 5s. (Methuen.)

Fleming and R. L. Stevenson and Edward FitzGerald. It is significant that scarcely more than a dozen of the letters selected are written by women. To the great disgust of those of my women friends who staunchly believe in the inferiority of man, I have always maintained that, judging from one's ordinary correspondence, a man writes a better letter than a woman, and it is evident that Mr. Lucas, who has had the experience of centuries to choose from, agrees with me. But the proportion might have been different had be been dealing with French letters.

The mere headings in the list of contents give delight. Among them are "Children and Grandfathers," where Thomas Hayley (aged 12) points out defects in Cowper's translation of Homer, and the guilty poet replies: "With a Spice," where Jane Welsh Carlyle tells all the news in seven letters; "Urbanity and Nonsense," where Robert Louis Stevenson offers to exchange bodies with Cosmo Monkhouse.

"My place, to which I now introduce you—it is yours—is like a London house, high and very narrow. Upon the lungs I will not linger; the heart is large enough for a ballroom; the belly greedy and inefficient; the brain stocked with the most damnable explosives, like a dynamiter's den. The whole place is well furnished, though not in a very pure taste; Corinthian, much of it; showy and not strong. . . .

"There is one article I wish to take away with me: my spirits. They suit me. I don't want yours; I like my own; I have had them a long while in bottle. It is my only reservation."

Under the heading "Men of Action," Abraham Cann, the Devonshire wrestler, challenges Polkinghorne, the Cornishman, in these terms:

"Polkinghorne, I will take off my stockings and play barelegged with you, and you may have two of the hardest and heaviest shoes you like that can be made of leather in the county of Cornwall, and you shall be allowed to stuff yourself as high as the arm-pits, to any extent not exceeding the size of a Cornish peck of wool; and I will further engage not to kick you, if you do not kick me."

In the same section C. A., an old and not unsophisticated bowler, gives his captain a word of counsel on the eve of the All England match:

"DEAR JOHN,—So I am to bowl against them Englanders. You wants to win, don't you now? Then don't be so stupid as to roll your ground.—Yours, C. A."

It is impossible to write a critical notice of such a book as this, but to quote it is as natural as breathing. Here is the Baboo as letter-writer:

"HONOURABLE SIR,—Kindly excuse this poor thy servant from attending on your Honour's office this day, as I am suffering from the well-known disease commonly called ache of the interior economy, and I shall ever pray.—Yours ever painful,

"RAM CHUNDER."

"P.S.—Oh, death, where is thy sting?"

The earliest letter, according to Mr. Lucas, may be put *circa* 1035 B.C., and runs thus:

(David to Joab, sent by the hand of Uriah.) "Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die."

A model of brevity may be found in:

"Mr. Rogers to Lady Dufferin: 'Will you dine with me on Wednesday?'

"Lady Dufferin to Mr. Rogers: 'Won't I?'"

It is not often that a reviewer gains so much pure pleasure in the pursuit of his calling as is the case with this wholly charming book. In the letter which forms the preface Mr. Lucas writes that the collection does not attempt to be representative, and concludes, "Perhaps one day I will try again." To reply to him here is too great a temptation to be resisted. DEAR MR. LUCAS,—Please do, very soon.—Yours faithfully,

ELIZABETH LEE.

Photo by Window & Grove. **Sir Richard Claverhouse Jebb.**

A FINISHED SCHOLAR.*

When Sir Richard Jebb was returned to Parliament as member for Cambridge University, in succession to Sir George Stokes, the *Times* remarked that "one of the most distinguished Cambridge mathematicians is followed by the most finished classical scholar that Cambridge, or perhaps Great Britain, possesses." The use of the word *finished* was very apt. It is as a man whose self and career were extraordinarily finished, that Sir Richard Jebb appears in this biography. At school he won prizes; as an undergraduate, scholarships; he was Senior Classic of his year, "with a wide margin above the next man." He carried everything before him, as the saying goes. He occupied a prominent place, socially and academically, in his college and university; was made Professor of Greek at Glasgow (where the finish of his dress attracted attention), and finally was elected to the chair of Greek at Cambridge. He entered Parliament with much more success than most scholars. Though slightly academic in tone, he could, on occasion, compose an election poster—and turn directly from that to the preparation of a lecture on Macaulay. He was knighted and received the Order of Merit. He knew everybody, and was distinguished for his extreme tactfulness. There, perhaps, and in his carefulness, lay the reasons—the worldly reasons—of his success. He disarmed the opposition he would never have pushed against. He could be trusted to fill an appointment becomingly, if not with originality. He was (let the word pass) a reliable man. Of his great edition of Sophocles, Dr. Verrall said at the time of publication: "Though there cannot be a final interpretation of such a work, there can be, for a particular language, a permanent basis of interpretation; and such we think Professor Jebb will be found to have furnished to the English students and expositors of Sophocles."

At the end of this biography there is also a chapter, by

* "Life and Letters of Sir Richard Jebb." By his wife, Caroline Jebb. 10s. net. (Cambridge University Press.)

Dr. Verrall, on "Sir Richard Jebb as Scholar and Critic," which should be read if only for the insight it gives into the classical commentator's work—or, rather, his art. Judging by its last sentence, Dr. Verrall's appreciation was written to stand at the beginning of the volume, and there, in fact, it should have stood; for it provides an even clearer, a more rounded, view of the man, as seen through the medium of his work, than do the letters printed by Lady Jebb:

"Sensibility, subtlety, delicacy, economy, reserve—these were, as I apprehend, the essential qualities of Jebb's mind, and the foundation of his skill in expression. . . . Fineness of stroke, the dislike of crudity, violence, and emphasis, an ever-present perception that what is most worth saying cannot—such is language—be said, but must, if it is to come with true force, be hinted and suggested, all these are principles common to the dramatist and the annotator. We have Sophocles illuminated by Addison."

Later in the chapter, in a sentence which will make a very different impression on different readers, and in a note to it, we seem to detect a limitation—voluntary perhaps—of the finished scholar:

"For, like most men of acute artistic sensibility, he had a strong respect for convention and tradition, a prejudice in favour of custom for its own sake.

"[*Note.*]—He could not speak of Euripides without pain in his voice, and seldom, without necessity, spoke at all. He had no strong desire, I think, to comprehend such a person."

And, later still, in a criticism of Jebb's Latin verse, what seems to be the truth peeps boldly out:

"Possibly he is, in a certain way, a little *too* Augustan—if that be intelligible."

It is quite intelligible; the letters make it plain enough: Jebb's finish was not to be attained without some sacrifice.

Therein lies the very real interest of Lady Jebb's volume for non-academic readers. She has confined herself almost entirely to the quotation of letters; she lets her husband speak for himself; and by so doing avoids the faults which are common in biographies by wives. The letters themselves, readable rather than self-revealing, are enlivened with many touches of Jebb's urbane wit. We feel, after reading, not so much that we have known him intimately (in the way we know the great letter-writers), as that we have been afforded a good opportunity of watching him. The character we see is of rare completeness, an unusually finished specimen of its type, and the type itself is likely to become rarer as the universities become more work-a-day, and more in touch with the mass of humanity.

IMMORTAL MEMORIES.*

Mr. Clement Shorter has thrown together in volume form four literary celebration addresses and four essays of a mere heterogeneous kind, to which he gives the title of "Immortal Memories."

In spite of the slightly necrological aspect of the contents table, it makes a companionable book enough. Mr. Shorter's enthusiasm for the matter of literary topography is evidently spontaneous. The associations of such places as Lichfield, Olney, Norwich, and Aldeburgh are not to him merely the occasion for literary compliment or reminiscence; he is convinced of the great importance of provincial sentiment and local idiosyncrasy in letters. In one or two passages, such as the conclusion of his first allocution to the *patres conscripti* of Lichfield, he attains to the expression of a sound feeling of reverence for the sage whose sayings in times of doubt and difficulty have a power to cheer and hearten us unshared, as far as we know, by any other English writer. His partial justification of Anna Seward has also something to commend it above that form of treatment which regards her solely as an object for caricature. The playful delicacy of Cowper, the subject of the next study, does not seem to us well summed in the epithet "simple" which Mr. Shorter applies to Cowper's prose, nor should we personally subscribe either the eulogy of Borrow's prose in quite the terms here employed, or the preference accorded to "Lavengro" over "The Bible in Spain." Mr. Shorter, while prolific of emphatic opinions of this kind, too seldom gives us his reasons, exquisite or otherwise. Yet there is little opportunity to combat his verdicts either on Cowper, Borrow, or Crabbe, for they are probably shared by nineteen out of every score readers of the present day. It is well no doubt to avoid harping on the morbid strain in the composition of Cowper, and there is reasonable ground for the defence of Crabbe against the imputation of sycophancy to his patron of Belvoir Castle, though the anecdote by which Mr. Shorter seeks to point the moral about Mr. Smith and his "vineries" (is this a misprint for pineries?) is certainly not quite authentic. Apart from a few emphases, which seem to us false, we would cheerfully go bail for the general accuracy of these portraits. Mr. Clement Shorter might plead, no doubt, that when he calls "Feats on the Fiord" a classic, or speaks of Marryat and Borrow as the greatest of modern prose-masters, or laments the exclusion of Crabbe from the category of major poets as "a tragedy," or refers to Matthew Arnold as having said the "last word" on that Celtic infusion which has given English literature its quality of imagination, he was not speaking on oath, but was merely giving to post-prandial utterances the appropriate adornment of twinkling or self-gratulatory exaggeration. The time, place, and circumstance of these addresses fully justify him, but, in reprinting them, he should, perhaps, have made the transition from serious meaning to humorous exaggeration a little more obvious.

Mr. Shorter has a just word to say in deprecation of "log-rolling," but log-rolling is, I think, fully as injurious to the dead as to the living. Any exaggeration or undue emphasis is, at any rate, as fatal, if not to the reputation of the victim, then with more certainty to the artistic quality of the ELOGE, a most difficult form of literary composition, in which we have come quite coldly and deliberately to the conclusion that Mr. Shorter, with all his merits, will never attain to quite the mastery of a Fontenelle. His narrative and biographical essay on Lassalle seems to me a decided improvement on his treatment of the "immortals." It is certainly to be warmly commended to all who read 'The Tragic Comedians." But the gem of the collection, without a doubt, is the paper on Lord Acton's List of the Hundred Best Books. Mr. Shorter addresses his book by choice, not to bookmen, but to "sensible people." It will, however, need some tincture of letters to get the full humour out of this ingenious provocation to Homeric laughter. Few of any kind will be in a position to condemn Lord Acton's choice, for fifty per cent. at least are books of which no ordinary cultivated Englishman has ever heard. Here is a typical selection: "18. Punjer, 'Geschichte der Religions-philosophie'; 19. Rothe, 'Theologische Ethik'; 20. Martensen, 'Die Christliche Ethik'; 21. Oettingen, 'Moralstatistik'; 22. Hartmann, 'Phänomenologie des sittlichen Bewusstseins.'" Mr. Shorter, one is glad to find, steels himself against the temptation which would have overcome most writers to make broad and inexpensive grins at Lord Acton's expense. His philosophy in this connection seems to us irrefragable. "The fact is there is no possibility of naming the hundred best books." This list might well be Acton's favourite hundred; it could not possibly have been any one else's hundred (that is very true), because "every man of education must make his own choice." But the fascination of list-making proves too strong for our philosopher, and this concession rather detracts from the force of his observations. His own list, needless to say, is just about as good as, and no better than, that of any other popular writer and omni-

* "Immortal Memories." Johnson, Cowper, Borrow, and Crabbe: with Four Other Papers. By Clement Shorter. 6s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

vorous reader of the present generation. Three hundred years hence it might be valuable as a curiosity. It would be interesting to hear the literary critics of 2208 comparing it with that of Lord Acton. The majority of its names would prabably convey no more to them than those of Punjer, Oettingen, and Rothe to us. If, as Mr. Shorter says, the opinion of foreigners represents the judgment of posterity, what we should like to see would be the lists, not of typical English authors, but of foreign personages. Lists drawn up respectively, for instance, by the three foreign monarchs now in this country would be far more instructive than the most matured apparatus of the best of our own contemporary critics. If I were to make a list I should certainly want to change it in some particular every few weeks; anything is better than stagnancy in this matter of literary opinion. But the fact is that the drawing up of these lists for all men to see was a form of self-indulgence which we regarded for a season with easy condonation, but which must henceforth be relegated strictly to the category of private amusements.

We have noticed a fair number of *errata* in these chapters which should be set right in a subsequent edition. Even in a complimentary speech to an assemblage of East Anglians it is not permitted to ascribe the famous speech of Gregory the Great, "Non Angli sed Angeli," to St. Augustine of Canterbury. Moreover, we know from the subsequent pun *De ira* that the Angles in question came not from Anglia, but from Northumbria, so that the compliment was never addressed to East Anglians at all. On p. 281 we read of Mr. Austen Dobson, on 279 of Mr. Pepys's "own college of Brazenose" (it should, of course, be Magdalene, with an e), on p. 255 Las Casas should be Las Cases, on p. 127 we should read "Pope in worsted stockings," on p. 117 we have "*Edmund* FitzGerald," on p. 53 the title of Palgrave's famous anthology is incorrectly given, on p. 36 it should, I think, be Aston Sandford, on p. 169 for Howett read Howitt. These and one or two other tiny errors deserve recension in a book which will, doubtless, be widely read. I have reserved for my next visit to the new Reading Room the investigation of a word which is, I believe, a coinage of Mr. Shorter's own—"gyptology," or rather "gyptologists"—meaning possessors of gypsy learning.

THOMAS SECCOMBE.

A MODERN QUIXOTE.*

The saturnine Steevens was called the Puck of Commentators. For very different reasons we think of "Q." as the Puck of living novelists. We have learned not to expect from him just a neatly contrived plot, a machine-made romance, with the curtain falling at regularly recurring intervals to remind the knowing reader unpleasantly of the requirements of a successful "serial." Captain Bobadil's ambition was to train nineteen gentlemen "of a good spirit and able constitution" to fight "very near, or altogether as well," as himself. But this ambition is as nothing compared with the honour that is thrust upon most successful novelists of our day. Not nineteen but ninety-nine gentlemen are waiting to steal his recipe, and will turn out colourable imitations with all the speed of their Yōsts and Remingtons. It is "Q.'s" distinction that he easily defies such piracy. Whatever else it stands for, the signature of "Q." has never been appended to work unmarked by humorous invention, and by every grace that scholarship can lend to style. These qualities are in themselves a sufficient safeguard against imitation. But surest defence of all is the indefinable and inimitable Puckishness apparent in all of "Q.'s" novels. We should not like to be asked to summarise one of his plots. Their secret is the manner of their telling. The whole delight of a chapter may consist in a little scrap of dialogue. To repeat the story "in our own words" were as hopeless as to condense an essay by Lamb into a paragraph.

We have called Major Vigoureux a Modern Quixote, not because the Major is foolishly quixotic, in the erroneous and derivative sense, but because "Q." has in this character achieved the difficult task which Cervantes did supremely with the Don, and Fielding not less well with Parson Adams—he has exhibited a good and gallant gentleman in ridiculous situations without for a moment involving him in ridicule. In other words, he has acted up to Fielding's excellent maxim that "the only source of the true ridiculous is affectation." Major Vigoureux is never ridiculous or affected. He is the commandant of a Channel Island fortress which has been given up by the War Office, but by an official oversight his appointment is never cancelled, and the gallant Major continues to draw his pittance of salary, which goes to the upkeep of certain grasping relatives. Bravely and with dignity the Major faces the situation. He turns the laugh against the malice of Miss Gabriel, and quietly disposes of the pompous Sir Cæsar Hutchins. His servants love him and serve him well. Sergeant Archelaus spends a whole evening in sowing red stripes on an old pair of the Major's dress-trousers, in order to appear in a uniform worthy of an artilleryman, and the excellent Mrs. Treacher routs the inquisitive Miss Gabriel by accusing that sober but venomous spinster of "a-sheevoing it round Garrison Hill in the small hours, and a-holding on the railings, and a-clammering for strong drink." We are glad that "Q." has given a happy ending to so pretty a story. Of the wonderful intervention of Vashti we leave our readers to find out. It is enough for us to direct them to a literary treat, without descanting minutely and vainly on the bill of fare. Humour in these days is a universal demand. Some people like it the better for the savour of scholarship. To such we recommend "Major Vigoureux" by "Q."

J. H. LOBBAN.

* "Major Vigoureux." By A. T. Quiller-Couch. 6s. (Methuen.)

CONTRARIANT IDEAS.*

In his well-known study of the "Great Didactic" of Comenius (now a standard work on the subject in English), Mr. Keatinge produced a book after the German pattern. His present contribution to the literature of education is written rather on the French model. Not only does he draw largely on the French psychologists, but he has caught no small measure of the charm of French construction. Mr. H. G. Wells will be pleased to find here a book on education that is at once clear and attractive, written in a style that deserves his own adjective "prehensile." The first fifty pages are mainly occupied with a discussion of our present state of knowledge of suggestion in the hypnotic and in the waking state. Mr. Keatinge is not pleased with the usual definitions of suggestion. His view of the true meaning may be best gathered from the sentences: "A suggestive idea is one which exercises a disintegrating influence on the mind in such a way that critical and inhibitory ideas are rendered ineffective. It differs from a guiding idea derived from experience in that it has the power of determining the mind in a direction which is not the natural resolution of the ideas in consciousness, or of the dispositions which immediately condition these conscious ideas." His psychology, therefore, is largely that of Royce in its insistence on the importance of inhibition as a positive force. Very great stress is laid on "contrariant ideas." These are indeed placed in the first rank of suggestive influences. If we can manipulate them, we have mastered the art of suggestion. It cannot be supposed that Mr. Keatinge is unaware of the dangers of the atomistic position, but in spite of his critical attitude towards Herbart he occasionally falls into Herbart's error of appearing to treat ideas as if they had an independent existence apart from the mind. It is in the sections dealing with educational problems that Mr. Keatinge does his finest work. Probably the best chapter in the book is

* "Suggestion in Education." By M. W. Keatinge, M.A. 4s. 6d. net. (A. & C. Black.)

that treating of "Operations preliminary to Suggestion." Here we have some really useful principles freshly stated and admirably illustrated. No teacher could read this chapter without benefit. The succeeding chapter makes certain practical applications of the principle of contrariance especially in relation to reaction. Then comes a very clever analysis of the place of imitation in the Suggestion Process. It is when Mr. Keatinge deals with character that he becomes argumentative. He repeats the jibe that Herbartianism is popular among teachers because it flatters them by attributing to them greater power than they really have. It would be interesting to hear Mr. Keatinge's explanation of the fact that the French materialists have not won the same popularity among the profession since they promised it much more than Herbart ever did. No Herbartian flattery can approach the Helvetian "L'éducation peut tout." Mr. Keatinge's own pen does not lack honey. What could be more attractive to the intelligent teacher than the chapter on "Education as Creative"? Our author does not write wildly here. He spends a good deal of time in showing what education cannot do, but at the end he leaves an apparently insignificant power in the teacher's hands, but a power that restores to that teacher all the self-respect that is good for him. Mr. Keatinge limits the field within which the law of the conservation of mental energy holds good. In drill work we cannot add to the stock of mental power, but "on the side of education that deals with meaning the law of the conservation of energy does not apply." Every good teacher will rejoice to read that in applying the suggestive method "he may feel assured that one suggestive idea, the result perhaps of a few moments' labour on his part, may develop and produce a rich crop of conceptions which will systematise themselves, and slowly give rise to a habit of mind which is a habit only in name, because the relation of each part to the others is determined by meaning." Mr. Keatinge wrestles ingeniously with the relation between the unconscious and the subconscious, and draws conclusions of interest to the practical teacher. On the problem of direct moral instruction he takes the side of those who doubt its value, mainly on the ground that such instruction necessarily rouses those fatal contrariant ideas. Elsewhere he tells us that "boys like to be managed," but this does not appear to apply to morals. One is tempted to wonder whether those contrariant ideas might not be utilised by giving direct instruction in vice and thus securing a reaction in the proper direction.

The final chapter on "The Sanction of Suggestion" is capital, dealing as it does in a very helpful way with some of the most troublesome questions that are at present worrying educational administrators. Altogether the book is one of the most refreshing and stimulating that has appeared for a long time.

JOHN ADAMS.

THE HOUSE OF LYNCH.*

I suppose it is ten years ago, or more, since Mr. Leonard Merrick published his first novel; he has published some dozen books since then, and they have been warmly praised by the critics and successful with the public, yet it is safe to say that they have not, on the whole, met with a tithe of the success they have deserved. Mr. J. M. Barrie has said that to him a new novel by Leonard Merrick is "one of the events of the year," and that he ranks him among the half-dozen best novelists of the day. Such an opinion carries penalties along with it: it rouses high expectations, and takes some living up to, but by the time you are at the end of "The House of Lynch" you are ready to admit that Mr. Merrick lives up to it.

* "The House of Lynch." By Leonard Merrick. 6s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Whether he has ever written a better novel than this need not concern us; it is sufficient for the moment that no better novel with anybody else's name on its covers has issued from the press this year. Mr. Merrick writes like a born story-teller, with an ease and a strength and varying play of emotion, in all which you trace no feeling of effort, no straining after effect; the story seems to take its natural, unstudied course, and the effects to rise naturally out of it. Your interest is casually snared by the very first line of the book: "Though he had resolved to avoid her, he was there after all," and it is never allowed to escape again till you find your eyes smarting with pleasant tears from a reading of the poignant episode, charged with tenderest love and regrets, and happy triumph and happier surrender and reunion, that makes the closing pages the most thrilling and most memorable of all. To pretend to give any adequate outline of the plot would be to do the book an injustice; so much depends on the manner of the telling, the subtle, illuminating filling in of a hundred indispensable little details of character and incident. Briefly, the story is of how Dick Keith, a struggling young artist of genius, goes to New York to paint the portrait of one of New York's leading society ladies, and meets there and falls passionately in love with Betty Lynch, daughter of the unscrupulous multi-millionaire Jordan B. Lynch, who is head of a gigantic Trust that has crushed and broken the lives of thousands of men and women, and built up its huge prosperity on their ruin. Dick is a man of ideals, something of a puritan, if you will, a man with a real, live conscience. He loves Betty, but means to return home without telling her so, and when she, thinking it is her wealth and his poverty that is sending him away from her, lets him know that she loves him, and tells him with winsome frankness and simplicity that she wants him to ask her to be his wife, for "Betty Lynch does not let her millions spoil her happiness"—then he brings himself to tell her that he dare not ask her because he is poor, and because he could not live on her father's money: not that he is foolishly proud, but that the money is "atrocious" and not clean. For the time she is indignant, and fiercely resentful; but she had been troubled herself with the same thought, and, after resolving never to forgive him or see him again, she contrives that he travels to England on the same ship with her. He sues for pardon, and is pardoned; she accepts his point of view, is willing to be his wife, and live on his small earnings and refuse the wealth her father—as gentle and generous with her and her brother as he is ruthless with all his competitors—is sure to wish to lavish upon her. For a while the experiment succeeds, and they are ideally happy; but success is so long in coming to Dick, so much that is squalid and humiliating intrudes upon their happiness, there are so many things they have to do without, that at length Betty wavers; she thinks Dick over-scrupulous, she urges him for her sake, and for the sake of their child, to give way and accept the million or so that her father is eager to persuade them to have. He yields only to a limited extent, when he is penniless, and it is a question of a costly operation that shall save the child's life; and the concession hurts and humbles him; and estrangement and separation follow when he will not go on yielding, and she is bent upon profiting by her father's limitless liberality. This conflict of will between the two, and their gradual drifting apart, and the manner in which they are drawn together again when it seems as if they could never be anything to one another any more, is worked out with a fine and masterly skill. Old Lynch with his many millions, his one son dying, his daughter and her husband rejecting his gold as if it would contaminate them, becomes in the end a figure that is more pathetic than repellent; and it was no light task to make such a man as Dick Keith convincingly human, but Mr. Merrick succeeds in doing so. Alike for its characterisation, its narrative power, and the charm of its style, "The House of Lynch" is a strong and altogether delectable piece of work.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM: A DIARY.*

This is no book. It has no aims, and it does not achieve any accidental completeness. The early material is carefully recorded, is itself interesting in parts and handled with some charm. But after Allingham's twenty-third year, 1846, the diary form is consistently used, and the editors appear to have excluded nothing simply because it is meaningless. Thus we have on Friday, July 15, 1864:

"Dine and sleep at Macmillan's, Balham. M. says he and his brother Daniel and his sister used to have better conversations together on literature than he ever heard since 'from Tennyson and all the rest of them.' He gave his opinion of Goethe, which was not high. A pleasant German lady played the piano well; we talked of Freiligrath, etc."

We hardly see why this Friday should have been singled out from other Fridays in Balham or elsewhere. Then he records, and his editors abet him, that Trollope said he had been "in every *parish* in Ireland"; that he himself wondered, on Thursday, January 5, 1865, whether Balzac was "an honest writer," no more; that he once saw Browning "in his study, with proof sheets of his new edition in six vols."; that he told Carlyle "the joke of the sailor reading 'The Cloud—Captain Towers—don't know the ship,' and Carlyle laughed and said, 'I've heard that.'" Mrs. Allingham and Mrs. Radford could have been trusted to omit what was positively of no interest to the born or the unborn. Selection was necessary, they agree, for the diarist had no clear personality and point of view; he emerges only vaguely as an amiable, talented, modest poet, the friend of Leigh Hunt, Andersen, Rogers, Sullivan, William Morris, William Barnes, Watts, Carlyle, Browning, Tennyson . . . Piety is not concerned with a diary so impersonal.

The first chapter, 1824–46, is a pleasant essay on his early years, which poet, novelist, and psychologist may probably use for their own ends from time to time. To judge from passages like the following, it is quite honest:

"My mother or nurse hinted that I might share the use of the paint-box with my companion, but the sense of property was too strong, and I refused. When it appeared that the loan would be disagreeable to me, no more was said: but then I began to turn the matter over in my mind, and secretly bethought me, 'We shall all have to die in a few years; it is not worth while saving up these paints so carefully'—and I intimated my willingness to lend them. There was no sort of moral motive in it; and as to how I first got the impression of death, I have no clue."

And yet there are places where retrospection may have added something, as in:

"Opposite the hall door, a good-sized walnut-tree growing out of a small grassy knoll leaned its wrinkled stem towards the house, and brushed some of the second-story panes with its broad, fragrant leaves. To sit at that little upper-floor window (it belonged to a lobby) when it was open to a summer twilight, and the great tree rustled gently and sent a leafy spray so far that it even touched my face, was an enchantment beyond all telling. Killarney, Switzerland, Venice could not, in later life, come near it."

In another place he professed to be able to give both his early feeling about a house and his later *knowledge*. His memory for small details, to which he was apparently unable to give any significance afterwards, was very great, and it makes even this short chapter longer than it need have been. He was curious, and yet not curious enough, in confessions such as this:

"I feel it is no merit in myself, but an inheritance, a something like the shape of my limbs, and I have always an uneasy longing to undeceive people in every case, trivial or important, whether connected with myself or others, where the slightest misconception seems to exist. This tendency (strangely associated with extreme shyness in admitting any personal intimacy) often runs into absurdity, and I am sure I have often left people puzzled by explaining to them more than enough, and setting them a 'search for supposed motives.'"

There are good passages about Sunday, and about the childish belief that he at least could never die—a belief which Coleridge records of himself at one period.

But the fact is that Allingham could not write. Nothing, even of this early chapter, is peculiarly his, but only a writing man's statement of a few experiences. The social historian may get a note from these thirty pages about Ballyshannon in 1824–46. The remaining 350 pages are a great sea of misery with many hasty glimpses of most of the great men of Allingham's day and such green islands as the remark of a retired Customs officer:

"It's a queer world this! There's a man gone that had eleven and eightpence a day—eleven and eightpence! I wonder where Moses and Aaron are now, and Goliath and David, and all these. They were certainly here—they certainly were."

Or this talk with the plump head-waiter at the Cock in 1849:

"'Are you Mr. Tennyson's friend?'
'He says so, sir.'
'Has he been often here?'
'I don't know his appearance at all, sir. A gen'elman might be coming 'ere for twenty years without my knowing his name. Thousands 'ave asked me the same question, and some won't believe but that I know all about it. But I don't. I should like to see him—very much. I'm told he's *breaking*, sir. I should like to see him.'"

Queen Victoria's inscription in a book given to Tennyson is good:

"ALFRED TENNYSON, ESQ.,
Who so truly admired and appreciated the character of her beloved Husband. VICTORIA R."

That should please Mr. Max Beerbohm. It may be well that we should know that Carlyle dreamed of "losing his clothes and the like," and for six months on end, in old age, dreamed of Ecclefechan; and certainly all should know that he believed anæsthetics in surgical operations to be a mistake: "the pain a natural accompaniment and has its use"; yet he believed in blue-pill. Allingham himself once dreamed that he dined with the Queen. She asked him to "try her custard pudding," and he recited "O Miss Baily, unfortunate Miss Baily!" in the year 1848. It was a long time ago.

* "William Allingham: A Diary." Edited by H. Allingham and D. Radford. 12s. (Macmillan.)

THE ELIZABETHAN RELIGIOUS SETTLEMENT.*

In that "History of the English Church," in which the late Canon Dixon supplied most modern Churchmen with their theory of the Reformation, he complains of the difficulty of arguing with Roman Catholic historians who could not afford to admit the validity of Anglican Orders, no matter how strong the historical proof adduced in its favour. It was easy to turn that argument and to ask whether a Canon in the Anglican Church could afford to admit the invalidity of Anglican orders, however the argument might go. The charge and countercharge bring home the crucial nature of the test which Professor Bury has recently suggested for the real historian. So far, he says, as the investigator wishes any particular conclusion or fact to turn out true or false, he is not a true historian; for that wish will be father to his thought, and will inevitably, if unconsciously, warp his treatment of the evidence and mar the truth of his conclusions. It is a hard saying, and seems to rule out every earnest Anglican or Roman Catholic as a true historian of the "Elizabethan Settlement"; but hard sayings are not less true for being hard, and no impartial history of the Reformation has yet been written.

Father Birt tells us in his preface that he "started with no preconceived notion of proving a thesis already held." Nevertheless he could come to no other conclusion from the premisses from which he was bound to start. He remarks on p. 246 that the question of the validity of Anglican orders "has been set at rest for ever for Catholics by the decision of Leo XIII." *Ego sum Romanus rex et super grammaticam*, said the Emperor Sigismund, when a Cardinal objected that he had made *schisma* feminine; and

* "The Elizabethan Religious Settlement." A Study of Contemporary Documents. By Henry Norbert Birt, O.S.B., Priest of Downside Abbey. (George Bell and Sons.)

Popes would treat the history of schism as Sigismund treated its gender. But no one's *ipse dixit* can set a question at rest for ever, and a writer who builds on such a foundation is a theologian rather than a historian. So Father Birt's theological convictions determine his historical judgments. He cannot bring himself to admit that conscience or conviction had anything to do with the rejection of Papal jurisdiction and Roman doctrine. "The change," he writes (p. 296), "was not due to conviction but to the steady pressure of coercion." He does not go so far as some controversialists, who have maintained, though not in so many words, that while the conscience of a Catholic is the voice of God speaking in him, the conscience of a Protestant is self-will. But the assumption throughout is that, the Papacy being of Divine ordination, every unperverted conscience must necessarily recognise its authority. The Reformation could never have won by rights; hence it succeeded by wrongs. "It was a minority, backed by laws made in a packed and subservient Parliament, which imposed its will on an unwilling majority" (p. 358). Let us examine for a moment Mr. Birt's reasons for the packing and subservience of Parliament. Alluding to the circumstance that of the 236 recorded names of members in 1559 only some fifty sat in Mary's last Parliament, he declares that the change "could have been brought about only by Court influence" (p. 55). As if the loss of Calais, the fires at Smithfield, the general failure of Mary's policy at home and abroad, and then her death without issue, and the removal of Spanish control, were not in themselves sufficient causes to produce as sweeping a change as ever took place at a general election! Even if none of these causes had existed, Mr. Birt's statement is a *non sequitur*. There is no evidence worth the name that Elizabeth's Government packed this Parliament; but we do know that Mary sent round circular letters enjoining upon the constituencies to elect representatives of the "good and Catholic sort," and the change might have been due to the removal of this improper pressure.

Similarly, there are reasons, of which Mr. Birt takes no account, for the alienation of England from Rome. He quotes a Catholic letter to the Duc de Guise from England (p. 467), saying that "the good Catholics here . . . dearly love you . . . praying continually to God for your health." When "good Catholics" were "dearly loving" the Duc de Guise, there were other reasons than coercion to induce good Englishmen to be Protestant. It is this exclusion of other circumstances and concentration upon evidence which tells in favour of his thesis, that leads Mr. Birt into difficulties and impairs the value of his book. It is not an inquiry into the condition of religious opinion in the first half of Elizabeth's reign. The Puritans, for instance, do not come within his scope. It is a laborious attempt to put together every scrap of available evidence pointing to the existence of Catholic sympathies, without any attempt to balance this evidence by the voluminous evidence which exists on the other side. The result is to create an entirely false impression. Supposing, for instance, a political writer, purporting to give an account of English public opinion in January, 1906, were to confine himself to a description of the persons and constituencies which voted Tory in that month; he could fill scores of volumes, and to a person who knew nothing of the countervailing evidence, he could prove that "it was a minority backed by laws made in a packed and subservient Parliament which imposed its will on an unwilling majority." That is Mr. Birt's method, and he will be equally successful with the readers to whom his book chiefly appeals, and to whom the counter-evidence is unknown. Indeed, Mr. Birt has convinced himself; his concentration on his own case has been so thorough, and his emphasis of his own evidence is so exaggerated that the discovery of a few score of Catholics in a city or county is enough to persuade him that the whole diocese was "Catholic to the core." The same procedure has convinced him that among the peers who "were Catholic to the core" in 1559, were the Marquis of Northampton, and the Earls of Pembroke and of Hertford. Yet Northampton, brother of Queen Catherine Parr, had been one of Northumberland's triumvirate during the ultra-Protestant régime of 1549—1553, had been attainted by Mary, and only restored to his title on Elizabeth's accession; Pembroke was another of that triumvirate, was a firm supporter of Cecil, and was inclined towards Calvinism; while Hertford, Protector Somerset's son, is not known to have uttered a Catholic sentiment in his life.

There are some other strange mistakes in the book: Cranmer did not marry Henry VIII. to Anne Boleyn (p. 1); it was not Surrey, but Sussex (p. 497), who suppressed the Rising in the North, and the Stuarts were descended, not from Henry VII.'s younger daughter Mary (p. 475), but from his elder daughter Margaret. We say "strange" because Mr. Birt has worked long and arduously at his subject, and it would be unfair not to acknowledge the sterling merits of this book. It is the result of prolonged research among unpublished records, and Mr. Birt is too modest in his preface when he disclaims any expectation of producing material unknown to serious students of Elizabethan history. His volume is a serious work which should find a place on the shelves of all students of the sixteenth century, and must be taken into account by other writers. Some of his contentions, we think, are sound; it can hardly be disputed that the Elizabethan settlement was forced on the Church by the laity, though we demur when Mr. Birt says it was unpopular except in the sense that all compromises are unpopular. Further, we agree in Mr. Birt's main contention that the usual estimate—about 200—of incumbents who repudiated the Settlement is much too low. We can hardly accept his multiplication of it by ten; but if it were multiplied by five, we should not perhaps be far wrong. But there were 8,000 incumbents, not to speak of all those ejected by Queen Mary. These last at least had convictions; and when Mr. Birt says that the change was not due to conviction, we must interpret it as meaning that it was due to lack of conviction on the part of those who filled church-livings under Mary. Coercion was no match for real conviction; it was applied steadily enough to the Puritans. They spread under it, while it was fatal to the Catholicism of those who had served in turn Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth. The coercion which had made these invertebrates Catholic under Mary could make them Protestant under Elizabeth; but coercion is not the key to the Reformation; other and more complex causes must be sought to explain its failure and success.

A. F. POLLARD.

THE BLACK FLAG.*

In his interesting book "The Pirates of Malabar" Colonel Biddulph has given us what is probably a unique chronicle of the risks and difficulties under which trade was conducted between England and India two hundred years ago. "There was no peace on the ocean," he says in his thoughtful preface, "the sea was a vast No Man's domain, where every man might take his prey. Law and order stopped short at low water mark. The principle that traders might claim protection and vengeance for their wrongs from their country had not yet been recognised, and they sailed the seas at their own risk."

It may be said, perhaps, that the subject of piracy in Indian seas can only be viewed as a side issue in the Company's history, but there is no denying that at one time it became of dangerous importance to the West Coast trade, and even threatened to extinguish it altogether; the theme is one that is worthy of more attention than it has received previous to the publication of this book, considering how closely it was associated with the record of our early commerce with the East. The tale of the Angrian War alone might well be expanded into a separate volume, every page of which would breathe of death, excitement and danger. Possibly few, even among the most earnest students of the annals of this period in India, realise that the Angrian War lasted for fifty years, or how significant was its influence on the development of Bombay!

Conajee Angria, the Mahratta "Admiral," became the terror of the coast towns as far south as Travancore—the pest of native merchant vessels at sea; and, later on, owing to some unrecorded grudge, he threatened to give the English cause to remember his name. "A threat," says Colonel Bid-

* "The Pirates of Malabar; and An Englishwoman in India Two Hundred Years Ago." By Colonel John Biddulph. (Smith, Elder.)

dulph, "that he carried out only too well," since he became the scourge of the European trade of the West Coast till, in 1711, he was in a position to capture any vessel except the largest European ships. He also became the independent chief of a territory between the sea and the Western Ghauts extending from Bombay harbour to Vingorla, and, thus protected by both land and water, could bid defiance to his enemies. But Angria was a far-seeing individual. He recognised that it might be politic to make peace with the English, his own affairs having become somewhat disturbed, and, after capturing the Governor of Bombay's armed yacht, together with the *Anne* ketch from Carwar, he offered to return the spoil and certain of the captives to the Company if "an Englishman of credit" were sent to make terms with him for future amity.

Here we may turn with interest to the curious and pathetic little history of an Englishwoman in India two hundred years ago, so appropriately appended by Colonel Biddulph to his book; for the lady in question and her second husband, Mr. Chown, were on board the *Anne* ketch. Mr. Chown was killed during the engagement, and his wife was taken prisoner by Angria. Eventually she was ransomed, together with the captains and mates of the vessels, for 30,000 rupees. The "Englishman of credit," one Lieutenant Macintosh, being the bearer of the ransom as well as the arbitrator for peace. The imagination craves for further details. If only poor Mrs. Chown (afterwards Mrs. Gyfford) could arise and tell us of her captivity; or Lieutenant Macintosh describe his interviews with the fierce robber chief!

Indian pirates, however, were not the only offenders. Colonel Biddulph begins his book with an account of the rise of European piracy in Indian seas; and he devotes the second chapter to a most comprehensive survey of the career of Captain Kidd. He shatters any popular delusion that may exist as to the heroism of the famous freebooter, for he proves conclusively that Kidd was a traitor from first to last—a contemptible rascal without a redeeming virtue. Kidd was given a royal commission to suppress piracy, and he turned pirate himself; involving by his misdeeds the reputations of many of the most eminent men in the kingdom. Even as a pirate he was almost a failure, and had it not been for the political consequences of his crimes little would have been heard of him. This chapter on Kidd is of exceptional value historically, for the episode of the meeting between the pirate and Commodore Warren, as well as Kidd's letter, are (if we mistake not) published now for the first time.

It is perhaps to be regretted that further details of the naval fighting are not given, but doubtless it is because they are not forthcoming. An action that, nowadays, would furnish material for three columns of a newspaper, was recorded in a few lines only in the days when men did more fighting than writing.

The book is scholarly, conscientious, correct in every detail. If a fault can be found with it, it is solely that the information it contains is almost too condensed—that it is inclined to stimulate without completely satisfying the curiosity of the average reader who may be interested in, but not too well acquainted with, the subject. Like Oliver Twist, we ask for more; and it is to be hoped that Colonel Biddulph will give it to us before too long.

ALICE PERRIN.

THE CULT OF THE COIN.*

In a review, nowadays, of a new book by Mr. J. J. Bell, it is customary and almost inevitable to make reference to his first work, "Wee Macgreegor," and its widespread success in every English-speaking part of the world. That booklet, by which he first became known to the public, was published some five years ago, and since then he has written much; but nothing of so serious a character as this, his new full-length novel, "Thou Fool." It is true there are passages of pathos in "Jess & Co.," but in the main it, like his other books, relies chiefly on its humour for its strength. There is little or no humour in "Thou Fool"; and this is to be regretted, for the book and its lesson would not have suffered by the presence of at least one character to show Mr. Bell in lighter vein. But he may have been so carried away by his desire to preach against the vanity of money-getting as a be-all and end-all that he omitted, or preferred not, to remember himself as J. J. B., the humorist.

It is a story with a moral: the moral is that man cannot live by money alone, and that money-getting as a life pursuit damns the soul. There is a large class of novel-readers who have no liking for novels with a moral, but this need not deter them from reading "Thou Fool," for they can read and enjoy the excellent story, leaving the moral to take care of itself. That story has to do with the career of one Robert Barker, whom we first see as an ambitious apprentice to an old-fashioned grocer in the Clydeside village of Kilbran. Robert acquires some money, and his first act is to set up a business in opposition to his kind-hearted employer, who, promptly ruined by the heartless competition, commits suicide. Robert is "a business man," and claims that in fighting his employer he adopted only "business" methods. Which is quite true; he did nothing illegal; and throughout his whole career as presented to us, from his days as a boy in a grocer's shop in the country till he becomes a millionaire baronet, head of the vast concern of Coast & Company, Limited, he follows strictly legal, and equally callous, lines. He ruins small shopkeepers; without the slightest compunction he crushes opposition, though homes may be wrecked by the process; and not the slightest dash of sentiment enters into his dealings with his employés. He does not drink, he does not smoke, he is not in the conventional sense a "bad man"—indeed, in that sense he is a very good man; but it is Mr. Bell's aim to show that these things are not everything. Barker is not "black-rotten hearted" (like the people of Barbie), but the milk of human kindness is not in him, and it is for this that we see him in the end a broken and despairing man.

And yet Barker is not wholly despicable; he has a true and abiding love for a friend of his youth, and there may be those among the readers of "Thou Fool" who will feel just a shade of pity for him when there is broken to him the news that she has married another. Mr. Bell has made Barker a moral villain, but perhaps not moral villain enough.

Concurrently with the description of Barker's rise—a description in which there is much that is most readable in regard to grocer's shops (in which Mr. Bell specialises), Co-operative stores, and operations on the Stock Exchange—there is an ingenious tale of much attractiveness, introducing true pictures of life in the West End of Glasgow and of theatrical and business life in London; but Barker stands out as the commanding figure of the book. Variety is given by the stage experiences of the girl he loves; and it is worthy of note that Mr. Bell has had the courage to introduce a theatrical manager who, though he wears the usual evening dress and silk hat and controls musical-comedies, is not a scoundrel; he is, on the contrary, a most decent man with a sister. Was ever a sister of a musical-comedy manager ever heard of in fiction before? Other characters include a Society personage, Lady MacDonald, who would be more effective if she did not say such things as "I could never discuss breakfast and love together; might as well try to combine sausages and sentiment"; a fashionable Glasgow minister, who comes to the conclusion that he is an overpaid fraud and starts a boys' mission in the Cowcaddens; a wealthy Glasgow stockbroker and his pretty butterfly wife; and numerous business men, of whom deft portraits are drawn. The characters are played against each other with a skill that is noteworthy, and the various threads of the narrative are neatly caught together at the close.

The writing is free from fireworks; there is a simplicity which comes from art, not chance, and all flows with much ease. These are some of Mr. Bell's reflections, of which there are not too many:

"Life is like an examination paper, and the candidate who

* "Thou Fool." By J. J. Bell. 6s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

cudgels his brains over one puzzling question while he might have been solving several others with ease and fluency is by no means hard to find.

"Perseverance has its victims as well as its victors—more of the former, it may be, than of the latter.

"His mind was thought-proof. Nothing might enter unpermitted. . . . It is the lack of this faculty that makes a burdened man mistake worry for work, and sends him of an evening to the dramshop or the druggist.

"One of the rewards of success in any human struggle is human enmity. Since the world began no successful worker has ever won so many enemies as Christ."

"Thou Fool" is a fresh and invigorating work, and shows that Mr. Bell can work successfully on a large canvas with the brush of an Impressionist. DAVID HODGE.

ARABIA FELIX*

Hassan Ben Melik Ben Ebi Obeide was one day attending on Mansur the chamberlain, and he displayed a collection of proverbs which Ebn Serri had made for the caliph's delectation. "It is very fine," said Mansur, "but it wants a commentary." And Hassan in a week returned with a commentary, very well written, of three hundred couplets. . . . But on this book by Mr. Nicholson, it is as difficult for me to find the couplets as for the editor to find the space to print them. When a man sets out to write a book on certain lines, and does it, one is not on that account obliged to cease from carping, for the book may not be necessary. Now the present volume is as necessary to the man who knows a little of Arabian literature as to the man who knows it not. And as this latter class is the more numerous, it will be well if I reveal a glimpse of what this book affords. In the first place, it is not a dullish catalogue, as is the book by Huart; on the contrary, it is written with animation and with humour, and it is full of specimens of Arab poetry which are quite admirably rendered. Mr. Nicholson has got this gift in common with his colleague, Professor Browne. Here is one poem:

"If thou hast plucked down war on me,
No laggard I with arms outworn.
Whate'er befall, I make to flow
The baneful cups of death at morn.

When spear-points clash, my wounded man
Is forced to drag the spear he stained.
Never I reck, if war must be,
What Destiny hath preordained."

Is it not delightful to sail into this unknown sea, which has as many pearls as Heine's heart? And when the pearls are given you, their setting will not be the same as in their home. How far translators should reject the metre of the original is an interesting point. Suppose the metre is not one which sings itself into an English ear, I think it is advisable to have it rendered into such a metre as will have upon us that effect the poet wants to give. Surely that is wiser than to reproduce, with perfect faithfulness, the metre of the original. With Arabic that is particularly difficult, because the verse is quantitative: and when it comes to rhyming, nobody—not even Browning—could attempt to write a poem having, like one poem which I know in Arabic, no less than ninety rhyming words. But this will make the reader think the Arabs were but literary jugglers. Now and then, as elsewhere, they would be swept by waves of conventionality. The famous pre-Islamic poets were conventional in order of ideas and sometimes in their adjectives, but, after all, they did not sing for us, and possibly our own conventions, however different and beautiful they seem to us (the forms of sonnet, rondeau, triolet), will make some unborn Englishmen think that we were extremely curious. At times the Arab was conventional, and even then with brilliant flashes; at other times he sang with highest freedom, loftiest inspiration. I have spoken merely of one class of writers, but Mr. Nicholson unfolds the perfect history of Arab literature. HENRY BERNARD.

* "A Literary History of the Arabs." By R. A. Nicholson. 12s. 6d. net. (Unwin.)

LONG SHORT STORIES.*

As soon as a man begins to propagate literary dogmas, or to accept and blindly believe in those that are propagated by other people, you may safely conclude that, however young he is in years, his soul is middle-aged; he no longer goes about with an open mind—he has closed it and gone to sleep, satisfied that he has inside it all the knowledge that is worth having, that he can't expect to make any fresh discoveries for himself, that there is nothing he need keep awake and alive and on the look-out for.

In different moods, it is very amusing, or very saddening, to hear or read how your practically dead dogmatist lays down the law concerning the art of the short story, as if there were only one sort of short story that could by any possibility be artistic; as if it must be always a matter of a single incident, a single episode, and is bound to be hopelessly bad if it attempts anything beyond that. I don't want to dogmatise; I am prepared to alter my mind to-morrow if I can find out that I am mistaken; but so far as I can see at present it seems to me that the only hard and fast rule you can make as to the writing of a short story is that it shall be no longer than necessary. Some of the finest in the language have been told in about a couple of thousand words, and have narrated a single incident; some, by Mr. Henry James for instance, have grown to at least twice that length and have narrated even less; and it is absurd on the face of it to say, as many of us do, that you must not unfold a whole life-history, or so much of a life-history as involves several incidents or episodes in the telling, within the compass of a short story. Many a story which has been ingeniously stretched and spun out to the length of the average novel might have been a far more effective and more artistic piece of work had it been shorn of all its superfluities and written as one of those "novels in a nutshell" which the dogmatists despise.

Even if the latter has never yet been done quite successfully, surely that is no reason why it never should be. Mr. Stanley Weyman makes the attempt once or twice in "Laid up in Lavender," and if he does not succeed it is because he adopts a method that is not a good one. He not only relies too readily on the long arm of coincidence, but he sometimes contents himself with a crude trick of narration that is one of the weak features of Adelphi melodrama. The tall gentleman, in "The Surgeon's Guest," who has attempted suicide on the moor and been carried into the lonely house of Dr. Partridge, turns out to be the man who, in the days of his youth, was led into crime by the doctor's sinister partner, Mr. Woolley. Indeed, it was because he is still, though he has inherited money and is now a wealthy man, troubled with a sense of shame for his long-past sin that he came to the moor, not knowing his tempter lived in the neighbourhood, and shot himself. He recovers, falls in love with the doctor's daughter, learns that she is being worried into marrying Woolley because her father owes him three thousand pounds and cannot pay, finds the money to discharge that debt, and, facing the baffled rascal in the surgery, proceeds to recall himself to his recollection: "Many years ago there was a young man, almost a boy, employed in the offices of a great firm in Liverpool—a boy poor, very poor, but of a good and an old family," and so on. That is how not to do it, for things do not really happen in that way. The story is clever and entirely readable; I don't believe Mr. Weyman could write anything that was not; but if you want to see how to do it, you must turn to other stories in his volume such as "Lady Betty's Indiscretion," "A Good Man's Dilemma," or "The Vicar's Secret."

The stories Mr. Weyman has gathered together here are, as his title indicates, early examples of his work, but they are abundantly interesting in themselves, and some of the best suffer only by comparison with the stronger, more individual, more finished product of his maturer years.

The opening story in Mr. Anthony Hope's "Tales of Two People" is too long to be described as anything less than a short novel. It is a tale of a disputed right of way; Lord Lynborough, coming into the title and estates on the death of his father, finds himself denied the use of a path that runs

* "Laid up in Lavender." By Stanley J. Weyman. 6s. (Smith, Elder.)
"Tales of Two People." By Anthony Hope. 6s. (Methuen.)

across the property of his neighbour, the Marchesa di San Servolo, down to the beach. An erratic young man, in the habit of having his own way, he trespasses on the path in spite of all warnings and commands, meets with amusing and exciting adventures, is involved in a headlong love affair, and ends by acquiring as good a right to the use of the path as the lady who had refused it to him. It is all told in Mr. Hope's lightest, gayest, most delightfully whimsical vein.

"The Lady and the Flagon" and "The Duke's Allotment" are something after the pattern of the "New Arabian Nights"—the one very amusing, the other very charming, and both highly improbable. "The Prince Consort," the husband of a popular novelist who is head of her household and patronises him, till he writes a great book which eclipses all her glory and throws her so far into the background that when the papers refer to them she is thenceforward the one "who also writes," is an excellently ironical little study; and nothing could be better in its way than the quaint romance of that most fascinating of thieves, "Slim-fingered Jim." The irony of "Mrs. Thistleton's Princess," again, is admirable. The Princess is claimant to the throne of one of Mr. Hope's imaginary kingdoms; she is taken up by Mr. Thistleton, a lawyer, who proceeds to assert her rights. The Princess lives with the Thistletons, and they make the most of her in their circle; but after a while, her money is gone, Mr. Thistleton's efforts are not successful, and as their friends begin to smile at them, it is thought well that the Princess should pass as merely the Countess; then, when their friends begin to laugh, she becomes plain Fraulein, and, as some recompense for what they have spent upon her, teaches the children; till they tire of her and of feeling ridiculous on her account, and Mrs. Thistleton finds her a situation. The very day she leaves them there is news of a revolution in her kingdom, and she is invited to go out and accept the crown. The one man who had formed a sentimental, disinterested attachment to her insists on supplying her with money for the journey; and later, Mrs. Thistleton has an inscription placed on the wall of the large bedroom that was hers, before they made a governess of her and sent her to the attic.

There are stories in each of these books that are not up to Mr. Weyman's or Mr. Hope's highest level; but there are stories in each that are, and not more than one or two in either that were not well worth resuscitating from the magazines in which they originally appeared.

THE CALL OF THE SEA.*

Mr. Aflalo's volume opens with that glorious poem (prose one cannot call it) from the Psalms:

> "They that go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great waters;
> These men see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep. . . ."

Could anything strike a more resonant and decisive note; a note more difficult to sustain, even in a compilation from the best that has been written? Indeed, the reader who feels the call of the sea—by which I do not mean the man who merely wants to go to the seaside and laugh at niggers, but one to whom the call of the sea is as if it would tear him apart—will approach this volume with very great expectations. The pity is that he will be disappointed. Though there are fine things in the book, magical bits of writing, it has nevertheless a certain flatness, an air of infinality. And for the critic, at any rate, the question arises: Is it Mr. Aflalo's fault or his misfortune? How far is an anthology of prose about the sea bound to be disappointing?

Philologically speaking, of course, an anthology is a bunch of flowers, a book of specimens. A bad anthology *is* that. But what is a good anthology to its possessor? Something of this sort, surely, at its best? Just as before going to bed, say, one takes the lamp and hovers before the bookcase, pulling books out tentatively and shoving them back, allowing one's hand to be guided less by will and reason than by a delicate affinity, almost unconsciously exercised, between the mood of the moment and particular books; so the pages of a favourite anthology are turned over by its possessor in order to find pieces in harmony with his state of mind, to clinch, crown and satisfy his mood with the poets' supreme expressions of it. Anthologies in general may be kin to bookshops and public libraries, but my favourite, my intimate anthology must contain the quintessence of the books I own or would like to own. From this point of view, that anthology is the most successful which can so minister, without superfluity or short measure, to the greatest number of readers; and a specialised anthology, like this of Mr. Aflalo's, should perform the same service for a special order of books and feelings—in this case, for those related to the sea. When, however, we come to inquire how successfully "The Call of the Sea" does do this, we are confronted by the larger question of whether, or no, a prose anthology, made up of small extracts, can do it at all. Short poems, lyric outbursts, complete in themselves and by their nature intense, can obviously satisfy a mood in a way impossible to extracts from the necessarily more diffuse prose works. Hence partly the flatness, the infinality, of "The Call of the Sea."

Besides this general disadvantage under which Mr. Aflalo has laboured, there is another peculiar to the subject. An ordinary anthology of poetry, or even of English prose, represents a consensus of long-exercised critical opinion, slightly varied by the individuality of the compiler or the special purpose of his compilation. Mr. Aflalo has had no such foundation on which to build. It has been remarked that though we possess early narratives of sea voyages and the like, some of them very fine, the literature of appreciation of the sea is comparatively recent in its growth. Criticism has made such headway with sea poetry as its modernity permits, but with sea prose little has been done beyond singling out for praise certain exceptional authors. Mr. Aflalo, an interesting writer on many maritime subjects, knows how to avoid pitfalls which thoroughgoing landlubbers would walk into with serenity, but he would probably be the last to claim for himself a critical aptitude and experience capable of winnowing the whole mixed mass of the modern literature of the sea. His present volume contains much that is excellent, but not the supreme prose of the sea. A similar anthology, fully as good, without a single extract the same, might readily be compiled. Hence again the infinality of "The Call of the Sea."

Following present fashion, Mr. Aflalo has divided his volume into "The Ancients and the Sea," "The Character of the Sea," "Scenery," "Weather," "Sea Fights," and so forth. To this arrangement may doubtless be attributed the inferiority of some of the extracts, and perhaps also the erratic evaluation of the authors quoted. Mr. Kipling and Mr. Joseph Conrad are accorded only two extracts each, while writers of nothing like their genius receive three or more. The ancients are translated, but a pleasant feature is the inclusion of some pieces in their original tongue from French, Italian and German writers, in particular from Pierre Loti, the glamour of whose style cannot possibly be transferred into English. Mr. W. Hyde's end-papers do not, in this instance, call for praise. It would be interesting to know where he saw such a very extraordinary disposition of pebbles among rocks, especially in conjunction with a roughish sea. As a whole, however, "The Call of the Sea," though imperfect, is to be commended to lovers of the sea, not only because another small volume, so good and of the same scope, does not exist, but because, for reasons stated above, a much better is not to be looked for yet awhile.

* "The Call of the Sea." A Prose Anthology. Compiled by F. G. Aflalo. 4s. and 5s. net. (Grant Richards.)

MR. A. C. BENSON SELF-CRITICISED.*

> "Why should we wish to conceal the fact that we have suffered, that we suffer, that we are likely to suffer to the end? There are abundance of people in like case; the very confession of the fact may help others to endure, because one of the darkest miseries of suffering is the horrible sense of isolation that it brings. . . . There is no morbidity in suffering, or in confessing that one suffers. Morbidity only begins when one acquiesces in suffering as being incurable and inevitable; and the motive of this book is to show that it is at once curative and curable, a very tender part of a wholly loving and Fatherly design." ("The Altar Fire." Preface.)
>
> "The danger of art as an occupation is that one uses life, looks at life, as so much material for one's art. Life becomes a province of art, instead of art being a province of life. That is all a sad mistake. . . ." (P. 57.)

* "The Altar Fire." By A. C. Benson. 7s. 6d. net. (Smith, Elder.)

"But it is all without energy or invention, it is all worse than my best. The people are puppets, their words are pumped out of a stagnant reservoir. Everything I do reminds me of something I have done before. (P. 73.)

"Well, I have always held strongly that men ought to know when to stop. There is nothing more melancholy and contemptible than to see a successful man, who has brought out a brood of fine things, sitting meekly on addled eggs, or, still worse, squatting complacently among eggshells. . . . How often have I thought how deplorable it was to see a man issuing a series of books, every one of which is feebler than its predecessor, dishing up the old characters, the stale ideas, the used-up backgrounds. I have always hoped that some one would be kind and brave enough to tell me when I did that." (Pp. 77–8.)

Perhaps it is not very kind, and it certainly requires no bravery, to point out how aptly, if severely, Mr. Benson has criticised himself. Occasion has arisen before to remark (BOOKMAN, April, 1907) that he gives us too much of a good thing—this is the eighth good thing since 1904—and that it is largely for love of his earlier autobiografictions, "The House of Quiet" and the "Upton Letters," that we resent these later ones. If Mr. Benson believes, with the bogus diarist of "The Altar Fire," that one has no right to withhold from others any reflections which can console and sustain, and that it is the supreme duty of a man to ease, if he can the burden of another, he should at least reflect also that too much consolation is enervating, and the same consolation, too often repeated, an irritation. Were a friend to ask me, "What shall I read of Mr. Benson's?" I should be bound to reply: "Get 'The Altar Fire' if you like. It's very good, and seven-and-six net. But you may be able to get one of the earlier ones second-hand. Better do that. They're all essentially the same." The hands are the hands of J. T. deceased, J. T. super-deceased, T. B., Mr. Anon, Mr. Benson, and "My Friend," but the voice is the voice of Mr. Benson always, and he says the same thing eight times, with details according to the circumstances.

From an introduction which sets forth the main facts of this diarist's life, and the weighty considerations which led Mr. Benson to publish this deceased friend's diary (how childish it all is! as if we didn't know, as if we could forget, that these letter-writers and diarists and Mr. Benson are one and the same person!), we learn that "my friend" was a literary man in easy circumstances who published several novels of merit, then a masterpiece, and then lost his creative genius. In other words, he became neurasthenic and morbid. He lost his wife, he lost his children, and his fortune—that is, he was left with the miserable income (for a Bensonian introspector) of six hundred a year. At the end, he finds consolation in that sort of Christianity which is the so-called message of Mr. Benson's eight books—a temperamental compromise between faith and scepticism, reason and intuition; not the fear of God, not yet hardly the love of God, but a Christianity of the luxury of God. "The Altar Fire" is the record of "my friend's" misery and consolation. It is written with all Mr. Benson's honeyed felicity; some of its placid scenes are beautifully described; within limits—limits we are now familiar with—the introspection is exceedingly delicate; and the numerous character-sketches are decidedly better than in one or two others of the eight books. It is journeywork by a wonderfully expert craftsman. It is not creative; *les cris du cœur* are not there; we hear eloquent talk about them instead. "Real trouble, real grief," writes the diarist, "have at least the bracing force of actuality, and sweep aside with a strong hand all artificial self-made miseries and glooms." These later *études intimes* of Mr. Benson's are not bracing because they are not truly creative; they lack actuality; they are "backwaters in the tide of things." Neither are they really consoling, for we can no longer believe in their genuineness, and the sufferings of books which are to console us must be, or must appear to be, thoroughly genuine. It seems, in short, as if Mr. Benson has tried to make of human misery and human despair a background for his artistic effects. "What a vile and loathsome profanation," exclaims the diarist, "deserving indeed of a grim punishment, to make a picturesque background out of such things!" But in this case it is not so bad as that. Mr. Benson hasn't succeeded.

Novel Notes.

THE BROKEN ROAD. By A. E. W. Mason. 6s. (Smith, Elder & Co.)

The first two chapters of this impressive novel assured us of two facts—first, that in merit and popularity "The Broken Road," though a slighter story than "The Four Feathers," would prove a strong rival to Mr. Mason's earlier success, and, again, that in Mr. Mason we have the novelist we needed so much—the successor to Mr. Seton Merriman. The Broken Road, the road which allures and fascinates the men of the family of Linforth, the road which dominates the story, is the road which was to be made through Chiltistan in North India to the foot of the Hindu Kush. Linforth is murdered while working at it, and Linforth's boy, home in Sussex, is just five months old. At the time of Linforth's death a son is born, too, to the Khan of Chiltistan, and the fates of the boys, as of their fathers, are interwoven. Every chapter in this strong, absorbing story grips the interest and depicts an unforgettable episode. Mr. Mason's scenes capture the imagination and bite into the mind. When the two boys grow up, the Khan, with his strong Western ideas, sends his son, Shere Ali, to Eton and Oxford. Linforth's widow does the same for her boy Dick. And again the Road fills the mind of the Linforth, and he and the Prince make friends, and plan, and plan, and plan. But underneath the power of the Road Mr. Mason impresses a striking lesson—that it is dangerous to educate an Eastern boy to Western ways, and chiefly is it dangerous because of the ways of our Western women.

MR. MEYER'S PUPIL. By Eva Lathbury. With coloured frontispiece. 6s. (Alston Rivers.)

As this purports to be a first essay in fiction, it deserves rather more attention than it might secure otherwise. Miss Lathbury's style, as her publisher claims, should at least escape the charge of being derivative. But it is not difficult to guess her masters and models, and she will do well in future to introduce more movement and fewer introspective reveries. Mr. Meredith and Mr. Henry James get pardon for what in a lesser writer is apt to be condemned incontinently. Furthermore, Americanisms like "glimpsed" and "visioned" are intolerable. Apart from such defects, the slight plot of the book is deftly managed, for all its whimsical and absurd character. The abduction of a child in order to prevent the mother's elopement does not strike one, however, as a particularly brilliant or ingenious device, and the inner workings of Mr. Charles Inistoy are too inscrutable for the ordinary mind to fathom.

THE WALKING GENTLEMAN. By James Prior. 6s. (Constable.)

This is one of the most entertaining and original novels which have been published since Mr. W. J. Locke gave us "The Beloved Vagabond." For the noble lord who is the hero of this tale, is also a vagabond, beloved of a high-born lady, whom he callously deserts on the eve of their wedding, in order to wander aimlessly in search of satisfaction and genuine life. These he seeks among tramps and common folk. The development of the hero's character—though he is not very heroic even at the close—is not so well managed as is the series of experiences and escapades through which he passes. These the author has done full justice to. The cricket match and the nigger-minstrel episodes are perhaps among the choicest in the book. But it is indeed all good, with a genuine breath of George Borrow in it which will win many a reader. The author is sincerely to be thanked for so fresh and amusing a piece of fiction. It stands well out from the ordinary novels of its class.

JULIAN REVAL. By Philip Laurence Oliphant. 6s. (Nash.)

Just before the Russo-Japanese War, Hector M'Bain, skipper of a tramp steamer, member of a disgraced branch of the M'Bains of Tullywidles, brings from Helsingfors to London one Julian Reval, a young Russian of fascinating personality, who leaves in M'Bain's care a packet of papers closed with the Russian imperial seal. From a scene between an attaché of the Russian Embassy and Madame Tchernaya, a Russian secret agent, we learn that Reval is probably a member of the Imperial family, the hope, in fact, of the party which, in 1882, tried to convert the autocracy into a limited monarchy. Reval having escaped to England, it is necessary for the Russian secret service either to make away with him, or, better, to get hold of the sealed papers by which alone he can establish his royal identity. Still more does this become necessary when he publishes a book on Russian affairs just at a time when that country is seeking a war loan in England. How Hector M'Bain—and Helen M'Bain—lose the packet, gain it, and succeed through many vicissitudes in preserving it intact; how Julian Reval at the height of his success is undone by a green-eyed jealous woman, whose love for him has turned to hate—that is the story. Besides the characters already mentioned, we have an unscrupulous woman who is a society journalist, an unscrupulous financier, eccentric, not to say stupid, Sir Thomas M'Bain and his unscrupulous chaplain, and various other people, mostly unscrupulous. Virtue, as usual, preserves a harassed impregnability. The ordinary canons of fiction need not be applied to such a story as this. Delicacy, subtlety, style, ought not to be demanded. It is written within a convention—that, namely, of the sensational novel—and according to the standard of its convention it is decidedly above the average. The story moves; the characters sustain their unreal life with considerable power. Those who like this sort of fiction will appreciate this book.

THE SINNERS' SYNDICATE. By Coralie Stanton and Heath Hosken. 6s. (Hurst & Blackett.)

When a novel begins with an attempted assassination of the King, followed by the successful assassination of the Prime Minister, the experienced reader feels he is, like Scott's stag at eve, to "drink his fill" of sensationalism, especially when the same young man sits next both the King and the statesman on these tragic occasions. The promise of a German war-scare is not fulfilled, however. The suggestion of this is practically irrelevant to the plot, which concerns the machinations of a German secret society to murder a diplomatist. But it might as well be Italian as German. The real interest of the book lies in the adventuress, Esther Horne, and her relations to young Falmerdine. The latter nearly loses his true love, the daughter of the aforesaid diplomatist, but the ravelled skein of circumstances is untangled at last, in the accepted manner of such tales.

WHEN THE EAGLE FLIES SEAWARD. By Patrick Vaux and Lionel Yexley. 6s. (Hurst & Blackett.)

The eagle is the German eagle, and its flight is a naval war against Britain, which ends in the complete discomfiture of the Teutons by land and sea. The book closes jerkily with the sentence, "Germany as a Sea Power had ceased to be." But this desirable result is not attained by patriotic Britons without terrible loss of life and property, and the authors lose no opportunity of belittling, in genuine Jingo fashion, all who would suggest any reduction in the naval estimates or any rearrangement of the military forces in Great Britain. The animus of the novel against the present Government is undisguised. Yet it would be a pity to let this prevent the reader from enjoying the vivid descriptions of the sea-fights in the North Sea, where the main business of the war is conducted. The lurid pictures of cruisers in action are the choice part of the book. Where the authors are weakest is in the region of the plot. The German invasion of Britain is not described with verisimilitude. It is not worked into the web of the naval manœuvres, and even the latter are too episodical. But the reader who wishes his patriotism cheered and his nerves excited may be advised with all confidence to read this novel. He will not lay it down till he has seen the *Dreadnoughts* pound the German squadrons out of being.

MR. STRUDGE. By Percy White. 6s. (Eveleigh Nash.)

Mr. Percy White is an effective satirist of the fads and follies of London Society, especially that section of it which has its residence in the West End; and this is a worthy and characteristic addition to his popular novels. As is his common practice, he makes the book the work of the person whose life-story is being told, and in this case that person is Maximilian Hereward Strudge, the son of a lazy and alcoholic Notting-hill greengrocer with a small business, which he neglects on account of the calls that are made on him by artists who wish a model with a Jovian head, and because of his frequent visits to a neighbouring public-house where his club, the Half-Pinters, have their headquarters. The writing in regard to the father is done with rich skill, but the story concerns itself chiefly with the development of Maximilian, who at an early stage is given over to the charge of wealthy "cranks" who form a society called the Pretorians. Their idea is to "re-make institutions and re-form society on a basis of absolute justice and uncompromising logic," and in the carrying out of this idea Maximilian—a humbug of the deepest dye—is seemingly most helpful for a time, because he is quick, plausible, and can speak. Also, he has a fine presence, and is very popular with the women who are the mainstay of the Pretorians—so popular, indeed, that he manages to marry the Pretorian daughter of a very rich member of the guild. It is in these terms that the oily impostor tells us of his early training:

> "I studiously acquired the wisdom which now at any moment enables me to prove to an unbiassed disputant the advantages of collectivism over individualism; that wealth is due to the industry of the many, and not, as the dull assume, to the intelligence of the few; and that labour and not intellect is the most potent fact in industrial life. . . . And thus, sans peur and sans reproche, I had attained my nineteenth year before the first blighting shadow of suspicion fell on me."

"*Almost* sans reproche" is a very necessary qualification, for as a matter of fact he was a loose liver with more than one affair, though regarding himself as a model creature. In the end the Pretorians disavow him, he is divorced by his wife, and he marries an artist's model who is the mother of his boy. It is, as will have been gathered, not a pleasant tale, but it is cleverly done, and there are savage hits at certain present-day movements, and, one fancies, at certain present-day people. . . . The writing is good in the main, but it is gloriously unequal, and one finds such a collection of long words as this: "The habitual demeanour of the unlucky golfer is rather an exhibition of sulky disappointment than a healthy manifestation of irritability becomingly restrained." Mr. White's defence may be that the writing is supposed to be Mr. Strudge's, not his; and this defence may cover also this extraordinary sentence—"Me neither Amaryllis nor 'the tangles of Neæra's hair' must tempt from duty."

THE MEDDLER. By H. De Vere Stacpoole and W. A. Bryce. 6s. (Alston Rivers.)

This absurd and amusing story describes the woeful complications caused by the intervention of Sir John Boughton, a retired general, in the domestic affairs of his clergyman. Mr. Lamb, the parson in question, answers to his name. He is a mild, nerveless, harmless being, "a kind of vermiform appendix attached by society to his wife: utterly useless, not ornamental, and subjecting the wearer to fits of inflammation and choler." Mrs. Lamb, a stout and vehement party, devitalises this little, kindly soul, and, out of sheer pity, touched with some malice, Sir John persuades him to run up for a short visit to London. Here, the unfortunate cleric falls in with a wild, genial aristocrat, who beguiles him into the dissipations of high life. Mrs. Lamb's suspicions are soon aroused by his absence. She pursues him, and the story ends in a shower of mad pranks, in which Hellmore, an eccentric genius,

and Sir John's son, play a leading rôle. It is a rollicking tale of the lighter order.

THE MOON OF BATH. By Beth Ellis. 6s. (Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh.)

Miss Celia Winnington is "The Moon of Bath," a bright and dainty young lady, whose love-affair with Mr. Timothy Curtis forms the plot of this delightful story. Mr. Curtis has the ill-fortune to be suspected as a spy by a company of Jacobite intriguers, of whom Celia's brother-in-law is the ringleader; for the period is 1745. Miss Ellis has given us a charming tale once more, and readers of her former work will enjoy this eighteenth-century romance. It turns upon the old motives: misunderstanding, high temper, and the conflict between love and honour. But all ends well, after several narrow escapes and dramatic situations. The true spy is unmasked, Celia's lover is cleared, and the Moon of Bath proves herself no cold and remote Diana. The story is prettily told and well conceived.

ANCESTORS. By Gertrude Atherton. 6s. (John Murray.)

This large and ambitious novel covers three years, to each of which a separate section is devoted. In 1904 Mr. John Elton Cecil Gwynne, a brilliant young Liberal politician, is exasperated to find that, by the death of his father and the suicide of his father's heir, he must accept a title and pass into the impotent calm of the House of Lords. Partly at the suggestion of a cousin, Miss Isabel Otis, he decides to try a new career in the United States, where he happened to have been born. This forms the subject of the remaining sections of the book. His ancestral estates are near San Francisco, where the authoress is at home. She spends pages upon the inner condition and the social atmosphere of the place, interspersing these with more general reflections upon American politics. The result is that the story suffers. The characters of the women are strongly drawn, from Lady Victoria Gwynne, the cold, sensual beauty, to the almost sexless Isabel. Especially in the first part of the book, there is movement and vitality. Later on, it must be confessed, things drag. The characters become too often mere mouthpieces for eloquent observations upon Transatlantic doings and misdoings, and the reader pines for some human rush of action. When Miss Atherton likes, she can provide this. The account of the festivities on the 31st of December is a really sensational piece of writing, and the description of the earthquake leaves nothing to be desired in point of picturesque detail. But, without spoiling the plot, the novel could have been shortened by at least a third of its length. If the authoress wishes to write a pamphlet on American politics, let her do so. We shall be glad to read it. Only, it is inartistic to dovetail paragraphs of it surreptitiously into what purports to be a story. Now and then the dovetailing is clever, as when the hero reflects, "after lunching or dining at one of the great New York restaurants," that he "carried away the impression of a tremendously fashionable school in uniform—the women distinguished in appearance beyond those of any other American city, but utterly unindividual." But in other parts of the story the reader finds himself plodding through page after page of abstract discussion. The authoress should have remembered that serious purpose, a grasp of racial differences, and elevation of tone require a steady driving power, if they are to result in the composition of a great novel. There is the manufactured story, and there is the novel of inspiration. With all its traits of excellence, this book seems to belong to the former class.

VALERIE UPTON. By Anne Douglas Sedgwick. 6s. (Archibald Constable & Co.)

It is always a pleasure to come upon a story with some distinction, either in style or in conception, and the authoress of this novel has certainly succeeded in writing pages that stand well above the level of contemporary fiction. The book is really a study of two women. Valerie Upton has left her American husband, a pretentious, energetic reformer, in order to live the greater part of her life in Surrey. The book opens with his death. His daughter, Imogen, writes to her mother a letter which at once gives the clue to her own character. She is a self-righteous, self-confident young person, one of the exasperatingly good folk, who are never in fault, and who make philanthropy odious by their self-conscious posing. Miss Sedgwick, however, is too clever and subtle to draw a caricature. She traces with extraordinary keenness the interaction of the two women, the dogmatic superior daughter and the quiet, charming mother. The latter comes over to stay in America, followed later by a baronet who means to marry her. But misunderstandings arise. Imogen's lover, Jack, begins to see through her, thanks to her treatment of Valerie, while on the other hand Sir Basil becomes infatuated with the daughter. It would not be fair to disclose the end of the story. One can only say that the plot is unravelled with self-restraint, analytic power, and remarkable insight. The minor characters are all relevant to the main issue. Each tells on the development of the story, and this is another mark of the fine artistic sense displayed throughout the book. We congratulate the authoress upon a fresh and even brilliant piece of work.

WILLIAM JORDAN, JUNIOR. By J. C. Snaith. 6s. (Constable.)

This is a strange and curiously arresting work, in which, however, there is an annoying amount of elusiveness on the part of the author. Was William Jordan, junior, a genius; a lunatic; or a compound of both? We find him first with his father, a second-hand bookseller with next to no trade, in obscure lodgings in a mean street near the City, and we learn that the youth has been shut off almost completely from the outside world and been nurtured on Greek and Latin classics. "Beloved one" is how the father addresses him, and he introduces remarks to the father with the words "O my father." At the age of eighteen, William Jordan, junior, when his education in the way of those whom he and his father call "street-persons" begins, travels alone in an omnibus for the first time, and such is his knowledge of London that he willingly pays a cabman 10s. to drive him from Charing Cross Railway Station to Trafalgar Square. . . . The first half of the book is somewhat dull, and padding is present; but matters become more active and attractive after young Jordan obtains employment in the counting-house of a London firm of publishers and William Dodson, a London clerk, comes on the scene. Dodson is drawn with much skill, and his affection for "Luney" (as he calls Jordan) is described with touching reticence and effect. In the end, Luney dies, but not before his "great work," a poem of Life, has been published—at his father's expense. No reviews appear; but as the poet, half blind, lies dying, the father reads one that he himself invents as he reads. The day after the death there calls at the home of the Jordans an elderly man who says he has come all the way from Aberdeen, where for fifty years he has been a reviewer for the *Caledonian Journal*. He has received the poem, and he wishes to see the poet. . . . He is taken to the room where the body lies. With him is the father. The book reviewer leans across the bed and does homage to the lifeless clay—

"Why do you do that?" said the white-haired man at his side.

"Why do I do this?" said the other. . . . "Why do I do this? I am afraid, sir, it must be left to my great-great-grandchildren to answer your question."

Mr. Snaith gives no further light on the value of the book that was made by William Jordan, junior.

ALL MOONSHINE. By Richard Whiteing. 6s. (Hurst & Blackett.)

Probably Mr. Whiteing has never written a story that has been nothing but a story; he sympathises too passionately with human wrong and suffering, is too much in earnest after social reform to be contented to do that. The novel is a tool in his hands and he uses it to quarry into the heart of some vexed problem of the time and to fashion, if may be, some suggestion of a solution to it. In "All Moonshine" he pours scorn on the doctrines of Malthus and the absurd fear that the world can never become over-populated, and delves some way into the mystery of the folly and misery and sorrow of war between man and man as well as between nation and nation. Staying in the Isle of Wight and studying statistical papers that relate to this question of over-population, he is impressed by this footnote to one of them: "It has been calculated that, at four persons to the square yard, the entire population of the globe, standing shoulder to shoulder, could find room and to spare in the Isle of Wight." Going to bed with this thought in his mind, he has a dream, which he does not know to be a dream until later, and in it he sees the astral shapes of all the men and women of all the nations of the earth gathered within the shores of the Island; and presently you have the spectacle of two nations going through all the horrors and inhumanities of war with each other, and then a rising up of all the peoples against such raw barbarism, and "the war strike of the human race." It is all as unreal, as confused, as incongruous as a dream, but there is imagination in it, and thought, and a large suggestiveness, that together make it interesting as a story, and valuable as a sociological study.

THE JESTER'S WINDOW. By Keble Howard. 5s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Whether he is humorous, sentimental, or pathetic—and he is each by turns—Mr. Keble Howard works with the lightest, airiest of touches, and so cunningly that every touch tells. Some of the sketches in "The Jester's Window" are the slightest possible of incidents, the merest unsubstantial froth of dialogue; but you read every one of them with interest and unflagging pleasure, they are so wonderfully natural in tone and make their smallest points so neatly. The book comprises a series of "Real Conversations" overheard "out of town," "in town," indoors, about the streets, in shops, on railways, and elsewhere; a delightfully amusing story in six chapters, "My Country Cousin"; a long little series of "London Love Scenes"; and a short series of "Christmas Pictures." Scenes, dialogues, sketches, stories, they are all very varied, and are handled with a cleverness and grace and gusto that make wholly entertaining reading.

THROUGH WINTRY TERRORS. By Dora Sigerson Shorter. 6s. (Cassell & Co.)

Not many poets write novels, although several novelists have written poetry. With Mrs. Shorter the poetry comes first, indeed, but she already has several volumes of fiction to her name, and is to be reckoned with at the libraries. This tale begins with the fury of a drunken father when his daughter, whose bicycle has broken down, returns home late. He will not admit her to her home, and after bearing the torrent of abuse which he hurls at her from the window, she turns and flies from the door. A young artist from the house opposite befriends her, and paces the streets all night that she may have his rooms. But this quixotic action brings a result unlooked for by him, for the girl's father comes in bullying fashion to him next day, and to save the situation the young hero and heroine of the brawl are married. The story itself treats of the after-life of this couple, who at first seem ill-assorted, but in whose hearts there is the right fibre of love. Mrs. Shorter is genuinely interested in her story, and draws her pictures with no hesitating hand. But it is in the last chapter or two that we feel the poetry in her nature. Here, in the scene where the young wife waits beside a suicide, and looks upon his body, from which the life has barely escaped, she rises to thoughts and utterances which do not enter into the ordinary novel.

The Bookman's Table.

THE FOREST PLAYFELLOW. By E. K. Sanders. 3s. 6d. net. (A. Constable & Co.)

An exquisite understanding of an imaginative nature—that is the fundamental merit of this unclassable book. It is, indeed, a story which stands out and refuses to be classed. It is a book of atmosphere, a book touched with the supernatural, a book which a child may read, but only a grown person can understand to the full. It tells of Jock, a nine-year-old boy, only child of Sir Alwyne Burroughs, who leaves the cheerful, ordinary home of his Aunt Edith and uncle and cousins at Portsmouth to go to live with his father in the big country house, on that father's return from his long travels in far countries. Jock is motherless and alone, and the first day which he spends at the big, new home strikes him with unsuspected loneliness as with a blow. The pages which tell of that first rainy day, and of the day which follows, when he runs eagerly to the forest, so glad to be out and to explore the new wonder of the country, to be met with a sudden and an awful terror of the solitude which comes upon him, the horror behind each tree-trunk, the menace in the rustle of the leaves—these pages hold real power. Then we read of the boy's meeting with his quiet, rather sad father, of the unspoken disappointment of both when neither says enough; then we learn of the coming of the "playfellow," the dream boy, who is so real, who can be seen, who talks and plays and makes Jock so happy that he fears to tell his father, lest his father should guess how much his son has craved companionship to stave off the horror—lest he should learn, too, of the timidity: Jock's father being so brave. Near the end we read, too, of that strange night when Jock knows he shall never again be afraid. And as we read we feel, by reason of the finished skill revealed, not displayed, something of the excitement of discovery, and that half-wonder which greets some kinds of excellence. We shall place it on the shelf beside "The Golden Age" and "The Invisible Playmate"; not because it is like either, but because it is unclassable and exquisite.

THE ROMANCE OF MEDICINE. By Ronald Campbell Macfie, M.A. Aberd., M.B., C.M. Illustrated. 6s. (Cassell.)

When the scientist writes for his brother scientists he is usually discreet and sober in statement; but, as a rule, no sooner does he begin to write for the public than he becomes an incorrigible, not to say a flamboyant, enthusiast. "Century after century," says Mr. Macfie, "by offensive and defensive warfare, disease is being conquered, and the story of the combat is a long romance which will have a happy ending." Whereas it is at least doubtful if all the efforts of science have actually kept pace with and diminished the sum-total of disease. Dr. Ronald Ross, writing of malarious modern Greece and the decadence of the ancient Greeks, has queried:

"Could it [the malaria] not have been introduced into Greece about the time of Hippocrates by the numerous Asiatic and African slaves taken by the conquerors? Supposing, as is probable, that the Anophelines [mosquitoes] were already present, all that was required to light the conflagration was the entry of infected persons. Once started, the disease would spread by internal intercourse from valley to valley, would smoulder here and blaze there, and would, I think, gradually eat out the high strain of the northern blood."

And here is Mr. Macfie's re-statement of the query for popular reading:

"Little did the Greeks know that in the blood of the slaves they imported swarmed microbes that would devour their mighty civilisation. Yet so, it seems, it was. Nemesis in a gnat!"

To read Mr. Macfie one would think that, although in the old days great discoveries met with absurd opposition, now the progress of medicine is plain, sane sailing. But, in point of fact, we find that doctors disagree almost as much as theologians—they do not, for instance, accept without serious modification Metchnikoff's theory of phagocytosis which Mr. Macfie sets forth so convincingly with a coloured plate of white blood-corpuscles ingesting microbes—and in medical, as in religious matters, laymen tend more and more to say to the official spokesmen, "Go hang!" and to form opinions for themselves. It is precisely in combating the eccentricities of that tendency, the fads and fancies of unlearned opinion, that the "Romance of Medicine" should be most useful. Treating his subject historically, Mr. Macfie traces the discovery of the microbe and the "Romance of the Cell," and leads up in a very attractive fashion to the modern conception of the body as a "menagerie of cells," each possessing a life of its own, yet all of them marvellously interdependent. Other interesting chapters deal with antisepsis, anæsthetics, and antitoxins, and there is a fascinating account of some gruesome experiments carried out in Cuba to determine whether or no yellow fever is communicated only by mosquitoes. Modern improvements in diagnosis might advantageously have received more attention, but on the whole, in spite of its flamboyance—perhaps because of it—Mr. Macfie's work should do a good deal to convince a somewhat restive public that medicine has really progressed from a black art, through rank empiricism, to something approaching an exact science.

GEORGE ALFRED HENTY: THE STORY OF AN ACTIVE LIFE. By George Manville Fenn. 7s. 6d. net. Blackie.)

This somewhat belated "Story of an Active Life" would have gained by compression. Henty's activities were almost wholly in the service of newspapers; his letters from the front have lost their freshness after thirty years; and it was surely a mistake of Mr. Fenn to fill three-fourths of his volume with a *réchauffé* of such old forgotten things. And his discursiveness leads him to be didactic on the slightest provocation. Henty goes to San Marino—and we have several pages of mediæval history. Henty was a club-fellow of Colonel Fred Burnaby—and Mr. Fenn tells how Burnaby died at Abu Klea. Henty was a war-correspondent—and we have a chapter "Concerning War-correspondents," in which we learn how Mr. E. F. Knight lost his arm. We could have dispensed with these and like irrelevances for the sake of a more vivid and intimate biography of George Henty himself. The personal details in these pages are disappointingly meagre, and add little to the obituary notices in the *Times* and other journals. Henty's life was neither more nor less active than that of the average special correspondent; he seems to have had few personal adventures; and his chief title to remembrance is his supremacy as an industrious writer of stories for boys. We scan Mr. Fenn's pages in vain for an explanation of Henty's astonishing vogue; and when the biographer naïvely remarks that "Henty was not an imaginative man," we think of his eighty volumes in serried rank and wonder.

THE SENTIMENTAL TRAVELLER: NOTES ON PLACES. By Vernon Lee. 3s. 6d. net. (Lane.)

Whatever can be done by attaching labels of adjectives and phrases to things, persons and emotions, Vernon Lee has done in this book. It is a brilliant example of her characteristic niggling style, applied to objects of travel in Germany, Italy, France and Switzerland. She sees things, physical and spiritual, each with a neat descriptive label fluttering from it. It is her business in life to decipher those labels, frankly refusing to do so once only, so far as we have noticed, and that is when she says "being ill" instead of "being sick," but quite often confessing her uncertainty and proving her conscientiousness in this manner:

"The volume I got hold of was all North Italian cities; and among these I rambled with a delight such as no real places (I had seen but few interesting ones) had as yet given me, and indeed, perhaps, have given me since. 'Rambling' is the wrong word; it was no active living, but a sort of brooding sense of the existence of those places. Anyhow . . . ."

Hers is evidently a sport or pastime that appeals most to other writers; it is the effort that is interesting; the achievement seldom is; for there is hardly an emotion or a picture or a thought alive in the whole book, but only curious and subtle, unfinished sketches, which the writer might go on multiplying as long as sun and candles last. In the following passage she takes us round to see the labels attached to the collections in the Goethe-house at Weimar. She has just spoken of the portraits of Goethe's "Friends and Sweethearts," and the busts, paintings, etc., of Goethe himself in youth and "in all the different forbiddingnesses of old age"

"Forbidding, but not enough, alas! for the sycophancies of Eckermann, the theatricalities of Byron, the shakable sentimental conceit of Jane Welsh Carlyle, who sends him a copy of verses and (of all embarrassing untidy presents) a long tail of 'a woman's hair.' (Faugh!) There he presides, variously Olympian, over the dreary 1820 wall-papers and sofas and card-tables, key-patterned or sham Gothic, but all faded and dust-engrained, among the dismal collections of ores and crystals and skulls and stuffed birds: a pantaloon'd and stocked and swallow-tailed *rentier* Faust. And round him that court of huge blackened casts, Ludovici Junos and Rondanini Joves, and various decapitated Adorantes and Ilioneuses; that other company of faded ladies, stomachered or short-waisted, Lottes and Lilis and Maximilianes and Christianes, Suleikas and Gretchens, and Ottilies, on whose love and love for him (as on the succulent roast ox-thighs of Homeric days) the god Wolfgang nourished and increased his own divinity."

That is brief, clever, humorous, and there are a hundred better things, and yet they have the effect of converting the world into a huge brightly lit shop window, about which flits Vernon Lee affixing the tickets herself.

DAYS STOLEN FOR SPORT. By Philip Geen. 10s. 6d. net. (T. Werner Laurie.)

After the big success of his book with the terrible title "What I have Seen while Fishing, and How I have Caught my Fish," it is not at all surprising that Mr. Geen has made another volume about his many angling days. "What I have Seen, etc., etc.," was characterised by much genial breeziness of style, and it was easy to gather that Mr. Geen was a true angler. His new book, which has a title that is a big improvement on that of its predecessor, is a production of similar spirit, and is as frankly unconventional as the other. Mr. Geen is not a "literary man"; and he has wisely refrained from introducing the stock-phrases that are a feature of the output of too many of our "literary men" who write books on fishing. One gets the impression that Mr. Geen's talk will much resemble his writing; and one follows with a kindly interest his domestic details and his spirited accounts of adventures with fish and fly. It is a refreshing book, and has many passages like this:

"Although I am old in years—threescore and seven—I can walk the longest day, and shoot as straight as ever I could, thanks not so much perhaps to the stiffening of my loins by birchings as to the reason for their infliction. Stealing days has ever been a joy to me, and I often played truant from school. I had no compunctions at the itme, and have had no regrets as yet, for what I have learned in the fields and woods has been a source of life-long pleasure."